BUDDHISM

CRITICAL CONCEPTS IN RELIGIOUS STUDIES

Edited by
PAUL WILLIAMS

BUDDHISM

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Volume VI

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REFLECTIONS ON THE MAHEŚVARA SUBJUGATION MYTH

Indic materials, Sa-skya-pa apologetics, and the birth of Heruka*

Ronald M. Davidson

Source: *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 14, 2 (1991): 197–235.

Perhaps one of the least examined topics in Buddhism is the utilization of myth in service of clerical values. Myth, of course, is intimately connected with all the varieties of praxis, yet to read many descriptive analyses of the Buddhist dispensation, the nonspecialist might rapidly come to the conclusion that Buddhism has few concerns outside of doctrine. This impression is reinforced by both the Eurocentric proclivity to see religion in doxographical terms and by the modern Buddhist apologia—especially prevalent in the Theravāda world—that Buddhism is in reality not a religion but a philosophy. Buddhist specialists have frequently been seduced by either the Judeo-Christian models, which continue to exert influence in the quest for underlying unity in religious phenomena, or by the modern Buddhist desire to appear outside the pale of the set of behaviors subsumed under the term "religion." Thus, the exploration of Buddhist myth—along with ritual and other forms of activity—has taken a back seat to doctrinal formulations, many of which are recast in a twentieth century philosophical diction that can be quite misleading in its implication of set and setting.

Myth, in fact, has been and continues to be extraordinarily important to Buddhists. Yet the mythic functions are not precisely those found in the Near Eastern religions—Judaism, Christianity, or Islam. Specifically, the ideology of an encapsulated temporal sequence, involving a definite creation event, a closed revelation, and an approaching millennium, are all foreign to Buddhist mythic processes, which verify an open-ended spatio-temporal system wherein all phenomena continually participate in the expression of truth. In general, Buddhist myth does not reveal a cosmology of creation and judgement, with all the attendent personality issues of creator and soul. Instead, it seeks to focus the attention of the audience on paradigms exemplifying the potential for immanent rectification, irrespective of eschatology. Thus, as may be seen in most institutional

religions, Buddhist myths partly reinforce and are partially informed by the doctrinal structure; for the Mahāyāna this frequently invokes mythic expressions of the interpenetration of the relative and absolute spheres.

Such an ideology lends a peculiar polyvalence to Buddhist myths. They tend to serve an astonishing variety of functions, and, perhaps in keeping with the doctrine of existence without essence, Buddhist myths freely float from one milieu to another, sometimes being caught in the act of simultaneously serving multiple masters. The myth under consideration here—the subjugation of Maheśvara and the birth of Heruka—is one of these. We will see that it developed out of a source myth of Vajrapāṇi taming Maheśvara in the *Tattvasaṃgraha* and was used in service of establishing authenticity for another body of literature, the *Cakrasaṃvara* complex. It completed the cycle of hermeneutics in Tibet by affirming the authoritativeness of an entirely different system, the *Hevajra*, itself the scriptural base for the *Lam-'bras* system of Saskya-pa meditative praxis. The first part of this paper will examine these three forms of our myth, tracing the development from one form to the next, starting with the eighth century Indic *locus classicus* and finishing with fifteenth century Tibetan materials. The second part of the paper, *Interpretive Strategies*, will present an analysis of the Indic and Tibetan forms according to a tripartite consideration of history, literature, and doctrine, followed by final conclusions.

The locus classicus: *Sarvatathāgata-tattvasaṃgraha*

All three source traditions—*Tattvasaṃgraha, Cakrasaṃvara*, and *Hevajra*—are members of the larger set of Buddhist systems known as the [Guhya-] Mantrayāna, the Path of Secret Spells, or the Vajrayāna, the Lightning Path, in turn considered an extension of the Great Vehicle, the Mahāyāna. Like other facets of the Buddhist tradition in Asia, the Mantrayāna attempted to justify the inclusion of its scriptures into the open Buddhist canon. For acceptance as the "word of the Buddha," literature must verify that it represented the direct perception of absolute truth by the (or a) *buddha*, that it was preached by that *buddha* to a specific assembly, that it was collected by an authentic master of the dispensation, and that it was received by a current representative of the tradition through an authoritative lineage of Buddhist masters, however these latter are understood.[1]

Frequently, the crux of the matter was the verification of the circumstances of a scripture's preaching and collection. Buddhist innovators commonly identified a narrow range of dramatic moments when a new scriptural genre was expounded to an assembly and ultimately compiled into an authentic pronouncement. One of the more curious facts of the Mantrayāna is that, unlike most other Indic Buddhist traditions, it came up with multiple scenarios which purported to identify the circumstances of the preaching of the system's scriptures—known as *sūtra*, *tantra*, *mahākalpa*, *dhāraṇī*, etc., depending on the genre or period of composition. Most of these scenarios are lineage-specific; they discuss the

preaching of the great central scripture (in later literature known as *mūla-tantra*), often followed by a summary scripture (which is the received text) and the ancillary exegetical scriptures (*ākhyāna-tantra*) utilized by the members of a specific contemplative tradition. The lineages of the *Guhyasamāja*, for example, established the preaching of the *tantras* in conjunction with the myth of Indrabhūti, the legendary king of Uḍiyāna in the Northwest of India.[2] The lineages of the *Kālacakra* maintained two traditions: that the primordial *buddha* preached the great scripture to King Sucandra of Śambhala at the *stūpa* of Dhānyakaṭaka—thus tying the proclamation of the faith to the fabled land of Śambhala—or that the *buddha* preached the *Mahākālacakra* in Śambhala itself.[3]

The most commonly employed Mantrayāna myth, however, is developed from various sections of perhaps the most influential text of esoteric Buddhism: the *Sarvatathāgata-tattva-saṃgraha*, the *Summary of All Tathāgatas' Reality* (abr. *Tattva-saṃgraha*), codified in the early eighth century. Traditionally, the text is understood as the complex interweaving of myths and ritual, all under the directorship of the cosmic *buddha*, Vairocana. Of particular interest to those in the business of Mantrayāna apologetics are chapters one, six, and the epilogue. Chapter one delineates the culmination of the career of the *bodhisattva* Sarvārthasiddhi.[4] He has reached the apex of his natural ability to attain supreme awakening and has proceeded to the tree of awakening. All the *buddhas* then appear to him and break the news that he cannot achieve his goal through his current concentration: he needs the consecrations obtained by the contemplations transforming his body, speech, and mind into adamant (*vajra*). These he secures, and accordingly becomes the *buddha* Vajradhātu, with all the rights and privileges pertaining thereto. Subsequently, he follows all the *tathāgatas* back to the Adamantine Jeweled Palace at the summit of Mt. Sumeru to take his rightful place. The body of the *Tattvasaṃgraha* discusses the rituals and mystic circles (*maṇḍala*) focused on enlightenment and concludes, some twenty-six chapters later, with Vajradhātu turning the wheel of the *dharma* and returning to the tree of awakening to perform the acts of the Buddha in accordance with the worldly understanding of the Buddha's progress.[5] Most importantly for us, chapter six introduces what was to become perhaps the most influential myth of esoteric Buddhism—the subjugation of the god Śiva (Maheśvara).

Synopsis: Tattvasaṃgraha[6]

On the peak of Mt. Sumeru, all the *tathāgatas* requested the *bodhisattva* Vajrapāṇi, the master of mysteries, to produce the divinities of his clan (*kula*) for the *maṇḍala*. Vajrapāṇi, however, declined, saying that there yet existed criminals, such as Maheśvara and other gods. So Vairocana uttered the mantra *OṂ SUMBHA NISUMBHA HŪṂ . . . VAJRA HŪṂ PHAṬ*, and forms of Vajrapāṇi issued forth from the hearts of all the assembled *tathāgatas*, coming together to create the body of Mahāvajrakrodha. Vairocana intoned the mantra *OṂ ṬAKKI*

JJAḤ, which is known as the disciplinary ankus of all the *tathāgatas*. By this utterance the criminals, Maheśvara and the like, were all dragged to the Adamantine Jeweled Palace on Sumeru. Vajrapāṇi then commanded them to accomplish the Buddha's teaching by taking refuge in the Buddha, the *dharma*, and the *saṃgha*, and by obtaining the gnosis of omniscience.

But Maheśvara replied to Vajrapāṇi, "Hey, you're just a local spirit (*yakṣa*)! I'm the creator and arranger of the triple world, the master of all spirits, the highest God of gods. Why should I do as you, a local ghost, command?" So Maheśvara turned to Vairocana, "Just who does he think he is, giving orders to God?"

Vairocana responded, "I'd really do what he says, friend, and go for the refuges! Don't make Vajrapāṇi, this cruel, mean, angry spirit, destroy the whole world with his flaming *vajra*."

Maheśvara, however, decided to show Vajrapāṇi what fear is all about, so he displayed his great wrath and cruelty in the form of Mahābhairava, flames spurting out, with Mahāraudra's laugh, together with all of his minions: "Hey, I'm the Lord of the Triple World! You do what *I* command!"

They then exchanged more mutual challenges and insults and Vajrapāṇi returned to Vairocana. "Well, Lord, he's not paying homage to the teaching, being God and all. Now what do I do?"

Again Vairocana intoned the mantra *OṂ NISUMBHA VAJRA HŪṂ PHAṬ*, and Vajrapāṇi added his own adamantine *HUṂ*. Immediately, all the gods, Maheśvara, etc., fell down on their faces, uttering a cry of pain, and went for refuge to the Lord Vajrapāṇi. Maheśvara alone remained fallen on the ground, unconscious, and there he perished. Vairocana lectured the other gods about the virtues of the Buddhist perspective and they became entirely restored, happy and virtuous.

Then Vairocana addressed Vajrapāṇi: "If we revive His Deadness, he could become a real person." So Vajrapāṇi intoned the correct *VAJRĀYUḤ*, and Maheśvara was brought back from the dead.

He wanted to stand up but couldn't, and demanded, "What are you trying to teach me?"

Vairocana responded, "You still haven't done what he said to do. It's his business, not mine."

"But aren't you supposed to protect criminals like me?" Maheśvara asked.

Vairocana replied, "I can't. He is the Lord of All Tathāgatas."

Vajrapāṇi then intervened: "Why don't you just do what I tell you?" When Maheśvara heard Vajrapāṇi, he again became incensed and violent, displaying his form as Mahāraudra, saying, "I can endure death, but I will not do as you command!"

With that Vajrapāṇi uttered the appropriate mantras, and while the

world laughed, Maheśvara and his consort, Umā, were both dragged stark naked feet first before Vajrapāṇi, who stepped on Maheśvara with his left foot, while standing on Umā's breasts with his right. Then he uttered the mantra *OṂ VAJRĀVIŚA HANAYA TRAṂ TRAṬ* and Maheśvara started beating his own thousand heads with his own thousand arms, while all his minions outside the palace gave a great roar of laughter and said, "Look at our Lord being disciplined by this great being!"

Then Vairocana took pity on Maheśvara and, with the mantra *OṂ BUDDHA MAITRĪ VAJRA RAKṢA HŪṂ*, the touch of Vajrapāṇi's feet became the consecration which allowed him to obtain the level of the Tathāgata. Abandoning his form of Mahādeva, Maheśvara passed beyond countless world systems and was reborn into the world known as Bhasmācchanna as the *tathāgata* Bhasmeśvara-nirghoṣa.[7]

At that point, Vajrapāṇi commanded all the other gods, "Friends, enter into the great circle of the adamantine assembly of all *tathāgatas* and protect that assembly!" And they replied in assent, "As you inform us, so we will perform!" Then all the gods and goddesses—Maheśvara, Umā, and the others—were given new names and positions in the mystic circle.

This comical tale of direct competion between the Śaiva and Bauddha traditions recognizes the homogeneous nature of many of their rituals and symbols. As story, it was to prove extraordinarily successful: Maheśvara became one of the great scapegoats of Buddhist Mantrayāna literature, an evil buffoon like Devadatta, the "gang of five *bhikṣus*" in early Buddhist literature, and Māra in virtually all strata of the literate tradition. Indeed, it is clear that Maheśvara became the "Māra" of the Vehicle of Secret Spells, and the similarities between the Buddha's conduct with Māra and the treatment of Maheśvara were quite explicit, as we shall see.

How Heruka was born—*Cakrasaṃvara* mythology

The success of this myth is reflected in the multiple versions that spread almost as quickly as the Mantrayāna itself. Approximately the same stratum of the myth is found in the *Trailokya-vijaya-mahākalparāja*, whose Chinese translation is ascribed to Amoghavajra (705–774).[8] This version is more benign, ending with the submission of all the divinities; it completes the story with the assurance that the gods obtain amnesty from execution by their enunciation of a specific mantra.[9] Alternatively, a longer rendering of the *Tattvasaṃgraha* version was added to the *Vajraśekhara-mahāyoga-tantra*, but without the frame story of Sarvārthasiddhi/Vajradhātu.[10] Presumably, these versions hearken back to an oral epic, which continued to develop in association with the written forms. Beyond this stratum was the rendition of the *Candraguhyatilaka-mahātantraṛāja*, which

gives more prominence to sex and violence.[11] Chapter six of the *Candraguhyatilaka* identifies the protagonist as Mahāsamantabhadra, who sends forth the wrathful Vajrabhṛkuṭīkrodha to subjugate all the worldly gods and steal their women, finally bringing the gods back to life through the production of divine nectar, while Vajrabhṛkuṭīkrodha laughs with Heruka's voice. Clearly, this direction was mythically profitable, as the motifs were further accentuated in the *Guhyagarbha-tattvaviniścaya*, where chapter fifteen has Maheśvara spawned as one of the denizens of hell.[12] Heruka, the cosmic policeman, seizes Maheśvara and his entire retinue, rips out their internal organs, hacks their limbs to pieces, eats their flesh, drinks their blood, and makes ritual ornaments from their bones—a model of thoroughness. Having digested all these gods, Heruka excretes them into an enormous ocean of muck, which one of his henchmen, Ucchuṣmakrodha, drinks up. The gods are then revived. Properly grateful for what can only have been an extraordinary experience, Maheśvara and his minions beseech Heruka and the divinities of his *maṇḍala* to accept their wives, mothers, and daughters as ritual consorts while they take their correct places as the seats of the divinities in the *maṇḍala*. Apparently, the very vital forms of the myth found in the *mDo dgongs pa 'dus pa* and the fourteenth-century *Thang yig gter-ma* cycles of the rNying-ma-pa take their impetus from the branch of the story initially exemplified by the *Candraguhyatilaka* and the *Guhyagarbha*.[13]

Yet another version of the myth verified the teaching of the most influential of the *yoginī-tantras*: the *Cakrasaṃvara*. The birth of Heruka is taken in the *Cakrasaṃvara* system as the necessary antidote for instability in the world, and Heruka has preached the *yoginī-tantras* specifically to convert all those addicted to perversity. Heruka intentionally imitates their behavior and espouses its practice to win their commitment to the Buddhist dispensation. The source for this version of the myth is actually quite curious; so far as I am able to determine, fully developed forms occur only in indigenous Tibetan language materials, and the text of a Tibetan author of the twelfth-thirteenth centuries appears to be the earliest version.[14]

rJe-btsun rin-po-che Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan (1167–1216), the grandson of the founder of Sa-skya Monastery in south-central Tibet, is accounted by the standard Tibetan representatives the third of the "five great teachers of Sa-skya," being the son of Sa-chen Kun-dga' snying-po (1092–1158) and the younger brother of bSod-nam rtse-mo (1142–1182), the two prior litterateurs of the monastery. Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan was also the codifier of much of the Sa-skya-pa understanding of Mantrayāna as a whole. *How Heruka Was Born*—his verification of the preaching and collection of the *Cakrasaṃvara-tantras*—develops a version of the cosmic drama very different from those seen above in the previous Indic sources. Heruka as the protagonist and Maheśvara as the antagonist are depicted in ways dissimilar from the prior images. The plot, too, unfolds in an entirely different manner, devoid of the fast dialogue of the preceding versions.

Synopsis: How Heruka Was Born[15]

There are three parts to his story: I. the eulogy of the good qualities of the teacher Śākyamuni, II. the manner of the emanation of Śrī Heruka, and III. how the *tantra-rāja* has been uttered by him.

I. The *Bhadrakalpika-Mahāyāna-sūtra* relates how the teacher Śākyamuni generated the thought of awakening and then perfected himself for three incalculable aeons through the accumulation of merit and knowledge. Overcoming the four Māras, he obtained complete awakening in the final reality (*nītārtha*) of Akaniṣṭha, where he worked for the benefit of *bodhisattvas* of the tenth level. At the level of provisional meaning (*neyārtha*), he emanated himself in different places and taught diverse teachings to beings of disparate capacities. In particular, there was his manifestation as Śrī Heruka.

II. At the beginning of this Kaliyuga, beings started contending with each other through their common animosity. As the bodies started piling up from their mutual slaughter, they were removed to the various directions and the eight great charnel grounds formed. From the corpses ran blood, and as its vapor rose into the sky, the eight clouds evolved. When the clouds gave off rain, the eight rivers developed, and in them the eight divine snakes (*nāgas*) arose. Mists came from the rivers and the eight trees grew, each of them with its own protector.

Then, to the south of Sumeru, in the continent of Jambudvīpa, Maheśvara's emanation arose. Now in the various directions, there are twenty-four self-originated places. Within each of these, twenty-four ferocities (*bhairava*) arose, each with his own consort:

A. The four chief gods (*deva*) and four attendant gods were emanations from the mind of Maheśvara and came to operate in Jambudvīpa from out of the sky, thus identified as the eight sky-going ferocities (**aṣṭa-khecara-bhairava*).[16] They were blue because they represented a predominance of anger and were located in specific self-originated places:[17]

East—Pullīra Malaya North—Jālandhara West—Oḍḍiyāna South—Arbuda	Places of the four gods. In the language of the gods, these places are called *pīṭha*.
SE—Godāvarī SW—Rameśvarī NW—Devīkoṭa NE—Mālava	The four attendant gods. In the language of the genii (*gandharvas*), these are called *upapīṭha*.

B. The two chief local spirits (*yakṣa*), the two attendant *yakṣa*, the two chief demons (*rākṣasa*), and the two attendant *rākṣasa* were

emanations from the speech of Maheśvara and came to operate in Jambudvīpa on the surface of the earth, thus identified as the eight earth-going ferocities (*aṣṭa-bhūcara-bhairava). They were red because they represented a predominance of desire.

East—Kāmarūpa North—Oḍra	}	2 chief *yakṣa*, from the north.[18] Called *kṣetra* in *yakṣa* language.
West—Triśakuni South—Kośala	}	2 attendant *yakṣa*. Called *upakṣetra* in *yakṣa* language.
SE—Kaliṅga SW—Lampāka	}	2 principal *rākṣasas*. Called *chandoha* in *rākṣasa* language.
NW—Kāñci NE—Himālaya	}	2 attendant *rākṣasas*. Called *upachandoha* in *rākṣasa* language.

C. The two chief divine snakes (*nāga*), the two attendant *nāga*, the two chief demigods (*asura*) and the two attendant *asura* were emanations from the body of Maheśvara and came to operate in Jambudvīpa from below the surface of the earth, thus identified as the eight below-the-earth-going ferocities (*aṣṭa-pātālacara-bhairava*). They were white because they represented a predominance of ignorance.

East—Pretapuri North—Gṛhadevatā	}	2 chief *nāgas*, from the ocean. Called *melāpaka* in *nāga* language.
West—Saurāṣṭra South—Suvarṇṇadvīpa	}	2 attendant *nāgas*. Called *upamelāpaka* in *nāga* language.
SE—Nagara SW—Sindhu	}	2 chief *asuras*, from below Sumeru. Called *śmaśāna* in *asura* language.
NW—Maru-deśa NE—Kulatā	}	2 attendant *asuras*. Called *upaśmaśāna* in *asura* language.

D. Following the emanation of these twenty-four *bhairavas* and their consorts, Mahādeva arose on the peak of Mt. Sumeru, having four heads, twelve arms, naked, black, with his hair tied up in matted locks and smeared with ashes. His consort, Umā Devī, was red with one face and two arms, and they were in sexual union.

E. In conjunction with Maheśvara, his four Umā and eight Mātṛkā emanated. The four Umā derived from the qualities (*guṇa*) of Maheśvara and were yellow because of a predominance of malignity.[19]

Front—*Nīlarāhu (sGra gcan sngon mo)[20]
Left—*Haritoparāhu (Nye ba'i sgra gcan ljang gu)
Behind—*Raktāndhikā (Mun pa dmar po)[21]
Right—*Pītopāndhikā (Nye ba'i mun pa ser po)

F. The eight Mātṛkā came from the activity of Mahādeva. They were variously colored because of a predominance of envy.[22]

East—Kākāsyā (Raven-headed mother)
North—Ulūkāsyā (Owl-headed mother)
West—Svānāsyā (Dog-headed mother)
South—Sūkarāsyā (Pig-headed mother)

The four intermediate directions were occupied by the four **Ardha-manusya-mukha-rūpinī* (mother having a half human-headed form?).

As a shrine (*caitya*) for each of these *bhairavas*, Maheśvara gave them twenty-four *liṅgams* in the forms of self-produced stones, each in different shapes, from the shape of the top of his head in Pullīra Malaya to the shape of his knee in Kulatā. Offerings were continually made to these *bhairavas* inhabiting the twenty-four *liṅgams*.

Once established in Jambudvīpa, Maheśvara and his minions began to conduct themselves in a most irregular manner. For food they ate human flesh and drank human blood as their drink. They made ornaments of human bone—circlets, earrings, necklaces, bracelets, and belts—all smeared with the ashes of human bone. From human hair they wove their brahminical threads and fashioned garlands of human skulls.

Now in order to bring them under control, the "causal form of Vajradhara"—the experiential body (*sambhogakāya*) in Akaniṣṭha heaven—manifested sixty-two varieties of the emanation body (*nirmāṇakāya*) as the "resultant Vajradhara."[23] In opposition to Maheśvara and Umā Devī were the Mahāsukhadevī. In opposition to the four Umā were the Mahāsukha-devī. In opposition to the twenty-four *bhairavas* and their consorts were the twenty-four pairs of heros and heroines, in physical, vocal, and mental grades (*manovāk-kāya-vīrāvīra*).[24] And in opposition to the eight Mātṛkā were the eight Samayadevī. For each of these manifestations of Vajradhara, the color and number of heads and arms were in accordance with the demonic entity to be tamed.

The actual effecting of their conversion was brought about in three stages: behavior, absorbtion, and subjugation. First, Heruka and his retinue imitated the behavior of these fiends—they began to drink human blood and eat human flesh in the ritual assemblies (*gaṇacakra*), thus securing them the epithet of Glorious Bunch of Blood-drinking Divinities (*dpal khrag 'thung gi lha tshogs : *śrīherukadevagaṇa*). Then, stealing all the ornaments, Heruka and his retinue decked themselves out like Maheśvara and his minions, with garlands of human heads, dhotis of tiger skins, etc. They then supressed Mahādeva and his minions by causing their consciousnesses to be absorbed into the clear light, so that in the future Mahādeva would become the *tathāgata*

*Bhasmeśvara, as the Buddha had predicted. Then, in order to demonstrate their victory, Heruka and his retinue each took the cadaver of his opposite number as a platform, which is why it is said that they reside on a *preta* platform.[25]

Yet all these distinctions of subjugater / subjugated or converter / converted operate only in the realm of provisional meaning (*neyārtha*); according to the definitive meaning (*nītārtha*), they are to be understood as non-differentiated.[26] Thus the *Guhyasamāja-tantra* states:

> As physically adamantine, he has become Brahmā;
> As the vocal teacher, he is Maheśvara;
> As the mental teacher, he is Viṣṇu.[27]

So all the *bhairavas* and everybody else are emanations of Maheśvara, whereas Maheśvara himself is an emanation of Vajradhara. All the converting divinities are emanations of Śrī Heruka, who is himself an emanation of Vajradhara. Thus, according to the definitive meaning of this story, all the characters are essentially (*svabhāvatas*) Mahāvajradhara.

III. Finally, there is the teaching of the *tantra-rāja* and the unlocking of its intention by the lineage of exegetes. Having conquered Maheśvara, Vajradhara first preached to the five families of heroes and heroines a version of the scripture in one hundred thousand chapters. But during the time of the Kaliyuga, he summarized it into a version in one hundred thousand verses. Finally, because these could not be accomplished during this Kaliyuga, he preached a version of one hundred thousand letters, collected into fifty-one chapters. In addition there are thirty-two explanatory tantras and innumerable ancillary scriptures. All of these, Vajrapāṇi collected into texts and rendered into letters following their preaching. Eventually, the teaching survived in the literature of the four major systems of *Cakrasaṃvara* exegesis—those of Luhipāda, Ghantapāda, Kāṇhapāda, and Śavara. Each of them has utilized the three principal scriptures of the system, the *Tantrarāja-Laghusaṃvara* (To. 368), the *Abhidhānottara-tantra* (To. 369), and the *Yoginisañcarya-tantra* (To. 375). This elucidation of the birth of Śrī Heruka was culled from the speech of the teacher.

Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan's reporting of the myth in the *Cakrasaṃvara* arena is reflective of a number of concerns which will be explored below (*Interperative Strategies*) when the three applications of the myth will be discussed in conjunction with each other. In his framing of the narrative, we notice the decided lack of identified antecedents; it is simply "culled from the speech of the teacher."[28] The only sense we get that his version follows a Buddhist textual format is in its reference to the *Bhadrakalpika-mahāyāna-sūtra*. While the use of frame and embedded story is similar to that in the classical versions, the plot structure

follows meditative materials closely, giving the impression of an oral explanation of the *maṇḍala* praxis.

Lam-'bras and Ngor-chen's synthesis

The tradition of the Path / Fruit was one of many extraordinarily fragile yogic systems that found their way into Tibet in the eleventh century. Ostensibly, the *Lam-'bras* was based on the *Hevajra-tantra* and its ancillary scriptures, the *Saṃpuṭodbhāva-kalpa-rāja* (To. 381) and the *Ḍākinī-vajrapañjara-tantra* (To. 419). We have no sense, however, that the *Lam-'bras* enjoyed the popularity or prestige in India accorded to those meditative practices developed out of the scriptures of the *Tattvasaṃgraha*, the *Guhyasamāja*, or the *Cakrasaṃvara*—quite the opposite, in fact, since the *Lam-'bras* was a secret set of practices which purportedly passed through relatively obscure figures. Moreover, it was decidedly later than most of the widely disseminated systems and was initially not given in Tibet the esteem and acceptability granted those more popular traditions.

Accordingly, the *Lam-'bras* utilization of the Maheśavra subjugation myth followed a more tortuous path than did the *Cakrasaṃvara* version. Each of the *Lam-'bras* strata was verified by a systematic hermeneutic of authentication. Such hermeneutics marked the system's movement into an increasingly complex institutional milieu. The earliest *Lam-'bras* hermeneutic on the *Hevajra* was a minor work by Sa-chen Kun-dga' snying-po, a primary exegete of the *Lam-'bras*. His *Heruka's Prior Epiphany* is focused on the mythic explanation of the *maṇḍala*, rather than an explicit justification of the preaching of the *Hevajra-tantra*.

Synopsis: Heruka's Prior Epiphany[29]

During the practice of generating the visualization of the *maṇḍala* (*utpattikrama*), one should be aware of three specific teachings: the way that such visualization purifies the personality processes, how the goal is accomplished, and the manner in which that epiphany previously occurred. While the former two were explained elsewhere, this opportunity is now taken to explain the latter.[30]

Within the three realms of existence, the formless realm had no master, whereas the realm of form was ruled by Brahmā, and the realm of desire by Kāma-Maheśvara. While Maheśvara's minions executed his rule throughout, he stayed in Īśāna, overseeing his domain extending from the top of Mt. Sumeru to the four continents. Primary among his retinue were his eight "Big Worldlies" (*'jig-rten chen po brgyad*), each with his own consort and incalculable henchmen, all of whom jeered at and challenged the emanation body (*nirmāṇakāya*) of the Tathāgata. In order to subdue this ungodly army, the Lord manifested

> his wrathful form and the eight goddesses, these latter having the same names as the eight consorts of the "Big Worldlies": Vetālī, Gaurī, Caurī, Ghasmarī, Pukkasī, Śavarī, Caṇḍālī, and Ḍombinī. The major retinue of Maheśvara was overcome by Heruka while Maheśvara himself and the seven remaining "Big Worldlies" and their consorts were overcome by the the eight Buddhist goddesses. The subsidary minions were all finally collected into the eight great charnel grounds at the periphery of the *maṇḍala*. This being done, each of the Buddhist goddesses had the title "Adamantine" prefixed to her name, so that they become Vajra-Gaurī, and so forth. The goddesses' names indicate their representative castes; Vajra-Ghasmarī was the actual subjugatrix of Īśāna-Maheśvara, while Heruka converted Indra, Brahmā, Māra, and the like: thus their positions as seats of the deities in the *maṇḍala*.[31] This arrangement is in accord with the explanations of the teachers of the tradition, and the chronicle is derived from the *Tattvasaṃgraha*, the *Vajraśekhara*, the *Trailokyavijaya*, and the *Candraguhya-tilaka*.

Missing from Sa-chen's discussion are the many particulars which have made this myth powerful: there is no discussion of the preaching of scripture or its collection by a coterie of disciples; we lack any sense of a drama unfolding. Furthermore, the bifurcation into levels of reality, seen earlier in Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan's version of the myth, is entirely absent. Into this hermeneutical breach stepped Ngor-chen Kun-dga' bzang-po (1382–1456), the founder of Ngor E-wam chos-Idan Monastery (1429) and the most influential *Lam-'bras* figure of the 15th century.

While still at Sa-skya in 1405, Ngor-chen wrote a short work which already displayed his penchant for harmonizing the exegesis of all his available sources, rejecting outright those which did not fall into the range of acceptable variation. In his usage, "acceptable" primarily denoted material reproduced by the great teachers of the early Sa-skya-pa: Sa-chen, bSodnams rtse-mo, and Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan.[32] The text Ngorchen produced, the *Amazing Ocean*, delineates that aspect of the *Lam-'bras* tradition particularly concerned with the exegesis of its putative scriptural source, the *Hevajra Tantra*. Traditionally, Sa-skya-pa scholars have considered this the "Exegetical System" (*'grel-lugs*) of the Path/Fruit tradition; it relied on scriptural exegesis rather than on the meditative instructions (*man-ngag*) of the "root" text (*Lam-'bras rtsa-ba*, To. 2284) which properly belongs to the other branch of the *Lam-'bras*, the "Instructional System" (*man-ngag lugs*).[33] Both, though, traced their lineage to the *siddha* Virūpa, the legendary source for the *Lam-'bras*. As a chronicle of the Exegetical System, the *Amazing Ocean* orders itself along the lines of traditional certifications of authenticity: it explores the circumstances of the preaching of the *Hevajra-tantra*, its collection, the transmission of its exegesis in India and Tibet, and the manner of its proper explanation. We will be concerned with the earlier sections of the work, since they preserve the mythic materials concerning Maheśvara.

Synopsis: Amazing Ocean[34]

The absolute body of the Buddha (*dharmakāya*) is Hevajra (Heruka) who is the penetration of naturally occurring exalted gnosis into all aspects of reality, pure and impure. The *tantra* is the absolute, being preached by the absolute to the absolute through the presentation and dissolution of all events within reality.

In the pure realm of Akaniṣṭha-Ghanavyūha, the experiential body (*sambhogakāya*) of Vajradhara known as *Candrakāntamaṇiprabha resides, with eight heads and sixteen arms, surrounded by tenth-degree *bodhisattvas* like Vajragarbha, continually teaching them the holy scriptures of Hevajra.

Now Īśāna-Maheśvara is the lord of this realm of desire from the summit of Sumeru on down and has an inner circle of four principals (*gtso-bo bzhi*) and an outer circle of eight arrogant henchmen and sultry goddesses. Because they are so insatiable, they spend all of their time—walking, sitting, standing, or lying down—in sexual embrace. Because they are so perversely angry, they sport in killing humans, playing in their blood. They are utterly ignorant about the ethical law of cause and effect, and are entirely given to excess. They control all the people of this world system and spend their time touting their superior power.

Not willing to leave well enough alone, Heruka as the experiential body (as depicted above) entered into the contemplation of "Playful Adamant" in order to subdue Maheśvara and his gang. From each of the pores of his body he emanated *maṇḍalas* of divinity into the four islands of a billion world-systems. In this Jambudvīpa, he especially manifested as the emanation body (*nirmāṇakāya*), the resultant form of Heruka: Hevajra with eight faces and sixteen arms.[35] "Just as Sa-chen had explained," Rudra himself was overcome by Ghasmarī while the four worldly gods of his inner circle were overcome by Heruka, and the rest of the retinue were overcome by the other seven of the Buddhist goddesses.[36] By assigning Maheśvara's incalculable retinue to the eight great charnel grounds at the periphery of the *maṇḍala*, Heruka overcame their anger. By kissing, fondling, and other forms of great bliss, he suppressed their desire.[37] By mantras and all varieties of speech, he tamed their ignorance.

Then, immediately following this subjugation, the teacher Bhagavān Hevajra took residence in the palace found in the Vagina of Adamantine Women, and to his supramundane retinue he preached the *Hevajra Tantra* in 700,000 verses and in 500,000 verses, as well as the ancillary scriptures: the *Mahāmudrātilaka* (To. 420), the *Jñānagarbha* (To. 421), the *Jñānatilaka* (To. 422), the *Sampuṭa*, and so forth. According to the commentary on the *Ḍākārṇava-tantra* (To. 1419) there were preached six "root" *tantras*: the *Ocean of Yoga*, (*yogārṇava*) the *Ocean of*

Gnosis, (*jñānārṇava*) the *Ocean of Discipline* (*saṃvarārṇava*), the *Ocean of Ritual* (*kriyārṇava*), and the *Ocean of Reality* (*tattvārṇava*), these five being collectively equivalent in size to the large *Ḍākārṇava* (*Ocean of Dakas*) in 3,600,000 verses. The *Hevajra-tantra* in 500,000 verses was the text identified as the *Ocean of Gnosis*, thus being one of the vast scriptures revealed to the goddess Vajravārāhī and others.

Śākyamuni was the emanation body preaching all of these scriptures in a former time, later pretending to pass through the stages of a *buddha* in this world system to demonstrate the proper method for obtaining enlightenment. The great scriptures (*Hevajra* and the rest) were preached at the former time when the Buddha really obtained his enlightenment, and the received texts are but mere shadows of the source versions (*mūlatantra*). The process of collection was effected, naturally, by a supernormal being who was not subject to the little merit of this degenerate age: the *Hevajra* and *Sampuṭa-tantras* were collected by the *bodhisattva* Vajragarbha, who acted as interlocutor, while the *Vajrapañjara* was brought together by Nairātmyā. These, of course, represent the extensive versions—at least for the *Hevajra*—which have not been revealed during this time when life spans are short and beings are addicted to study and consideration, but without ever arriving at the experience of the taste of deep contemplation. Thus, the source versions of the grand scriptures have remained hidden so that beings will not be seduced into scholarship without meditative practice.

Finally, all the ideas of who preached what, where it was preached, who collected it, and so forth are details. From the perspective of reality's direct expression (*nītārthatas*), all the beings—teacher, audience, gods, devils, ghosts and saints—are merely manifestations of the teacher Śākyamuni's gnosis. Thus *Hevajra* II.ii.39:

> I, the teacher; I, the teaching; I, the listener with fine retinue. I, the proposition; I, the instructor of the world; I am the world and the things of the world.[38]

Ngor-chen treats the episode in almost as offhanded a manner as Sa-chen. He is much more concerned with the entire cosmic relation among the various bodies of the *buddha*, and the *tantra* as a fragment of an oceanic text expressing innate gnosis. The formal myth merely serves as door for the manifestation of gnosis in the world.

Interpretive strategies

Tucci, Stein, and Iyanaga have made contributions to our understanding of the various moments in the myth, whether in India, Tibet; or China and Japan.[39] All three have rightly remarked on the theme of the transmutation of Maheśvara's

hubris into the position of buddhahood. Both Stein and Iyanaga, however, have questioned the prima facie explanation that the story reflects the opposition of Buddhism to Hinduism and was developed to demonstrate the superiority of the Buddhist *dharma*.[40] Furthermore, having maintained that extrapolating doctrinal significance based on a modern perspective appears impossible—and is in any case illegitimate—Iyanaga appears to subvert his own rule by maintaining that the characters depicted in the story are symbolic or allegorical representations, allegory also being a primary theme in Stein's interpretive strategy. Iyanaga goes even further. He proposes that, as Maheśvara passes through moments—from being an obstruction to the *dharma* to becoming a *buddha*—Maheśvara's submission graphically demonstrates the nonopposition of Buddhism and other religions. Following this approach, the Buddhist and the nonbuddhist, Māra and the Buddha, the passions and the wisdoms, are all fundamentally identical. Thus, far from being a tale of the irreconcilable opposition of the two, the myth demonstrates their essential equivalence.

While there is much in these explanations that appears justified by the data, I believe that the conclusions could be further refined and I would resist the assumption that modern assessments are illegitimate. I propose an analysis of the versions of the myth by milieu: I. the *Tattvasaṃgraha* in India and II. the *Cakrasaṃvara* and *Lam-'bras* systems in Tibet. In each case, the analysis considers the myths from three perspectives: a. socio-historical, b. literary, and c. doctrinal.

I. Indian myth: **Tattvasaṃgraha**

a. There can be little doubt that the Indic story indicates the real tension between Buddhist and Śaiva factions. Buddhism in India has had a long history of weaving tales of the conversion of heretical leaders, beginning with Uruvilvā Kāśyapa, the leader of five hundred mat-haired ascetics who performed the fire sacrifice.[41] Furthermore, no one familiar with the hagiographic literature of India could doubt that Śaiva and Śākta ascetics—in particular, the Kāpālikas—were the primary targets of the Buddhists' competitiveness.[42] Buddhist monasteries at this period had become enormous landed institutions that controlled great economic resources but had a tenuous relationship to the wider society, somewhat like medieval Christian monasteries and modern universities. The literature of the Vajrayāna, however, does not reflect the values of these institutions, but stems from village and hermitage-based locales where wandering Buddhist ascetics were but another variety of *sādhu* found in many of the same environments as Śaiva and Śākta yogins. At this level of society, the perception of superiority is informed by oral literature, the ultimate source of the genres of written literature such as the *avadānas*, the *purāṇas*, the epics, etc. While the episode is clearly patterned after similar episodes in *purāṇas* such as the *Devīmāhātmya*—particularly noticeable in the mantric invocation of Durgā's great antagonists, Śumbha and Niśumbha—the circumstances of the utilization of the myth are

quite different. For example, the religious position of Maheśvara is unlike that held by the foes of Devī.[43] Thus, at the socio-historical level, we should understand the Maheśvara myth in the *Tattvasaṃgraha* as a straight-forward defensive technique of the Buddhists to establish the superiority of their gods over Maheśvara, Brahmā, Viṣṇu, etc., in an attempt to retrieve some of their lost position in unsophisticated circles in India, whether at Devīkoṭa, Vārāṇasī, Patna, or wherever. The noticably increased mythic and symbolic orientation of the Vajrayāna brought with it both the strength of dramatic images and the weakness of having to follow pre-established models of myth, which were often Hindu. Thus, this strategy vitiated Vajrayānists' efforts at increasing their visibility and position, since they began to appear homogeneous with the more extensive Hindu mythic systems. We realize that they were ultimately unsuccessful in their endeavor and may appreciate the threat by considering either the displacement of Buddhist cave structures in Ellora by the more mythically-oriented Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava versions or the intrusion of Vaiṣṇava brahmans into the Mahābodhi temple at Bodhgāya.

b. The literary techniques employed, as Iyanaga has rightly observed, include material from both the *Devīmāhātmya* and the Buddha's subjugation of Māra. Like these, of course, the myth works at several levels, including a literal one. Essential to the Indian understanding of story is that it be predicated as *real*, not regarded as a spiritualized allegory. Indeed, one could make the case that traditional India does not recognize a strict distinction between ideals and reals, the supposition being, for example, that the *Meghadūta* and the *Lokaprajñapti* reflect the real landscape of the world, their cosmology indicative of the way things really are, despite appearances.

By the same token, events, in order to be real, must fall into certain ideological frameworks. Should events in the world not correspond to the ideology, then the world is out of balance and must be brought into harmonic resonance with the ideal. Concerns of this variety motivate mythic cycles of world renewal, and Hindu renewal myths—such as the *Devīmāhātmya*—are devoted to the rectification of the imbalance among the demons, gods and humans. Differences, of course, abound, and we note that the Buddhist version, in which Maheśvara is included into the *maṇḍala* and eventually liberated, differentiates Hindu themes of naked power from Buddhist models of compassionate activity. Buddhist systems of reform, moreover, go back at least as far as the *purāṇas*, and the principle of economy would ask us minimally to examine Buddhist literature for prototypes.

The correspondence between Maheśvara and Māra can be seen from internal scriptural statements—as in the *Mahāvairocana-abhisambodhi-sūtra*—and from later hermeneutics, which we will see when we turn to the *Hevajra* materials, below.[44] However, the Māra story is that of the unenlightened Bodhisattva overcoming the threats and temptations of the Lord of Desire. "Māra," of course, is derived from the root √*mṛ*, to die, so that the Bodhisattva becomes awakened by overcoming the potential for death and subsequent rebirth. Māra never becomes

converted, and in Buddhist legend remains until it comes time for him to talk the Buddha into passing into final *nirvāṇa*. Conversely, early Buddhist literature is replete with examples of demonic individuals who became converted and who subsequently won either *nirvāṇa* or extraordinary greatness—Aṅgulimāla, Aśoka, etc.—as opposed to Devadatta, who is like Māra in his intractability.

The Maheśvara episode, in fact, sets up two levels of story. First, there is the frame story of the obtainment of enlightenment by the *bodhisattva* Sarvārthasiddhi, who needs the worldly gods integrated into the *maṇḍala* to complete his activity as a *buddha* and teach the world. Then, there is the conversion of Maheśvara, who keeps the world out of balance by his activity. The first is brought to fruition by the resolution of the second, embedded, story. In a sense, the interrelation of the two—whatever their prototypes—is patterned after the episodes in the legend of the Buddha, and particularly those of the *Vinaya*, where teaching can only be effected following the dispersal of a behavioral aberration, in this case, Maheśvara's unattractive habits.

Just as important is the retention of struggle and resolution in the Vajrayāna context. The universalization of buddhaness (*buddhatā*) in the form of the cosmic *buddha* Vairocana obviates any immediate personal difficulties—Vajrayāna, with its concern for postulating an enlightened ground, could not include Mahāvairocana in an individual struggle against his own obscurations. He could, however, become involved in the elimination of other beings' difficulties by reason of his great compassion, but his activity is mediated through Vajrapāṇi—Mahāvairocana does not himself subjugate Maheśvara. Thus, the dramatic requirements of cosmic mythology are fulfilled in the *Tattvasaṃgraha* by the scripture's refusal to depict Mahāvairocana as an abstract entity. Instead, he works through Vajrapāṇi for the salvation of beings from their own rude behavior—even if such behavior is as degenerate as that of Maheśvara—insisting finally on their integration into the balanced array of reality's *maṇḍala*.

c. Doctrinally, the *Tattvasaṃgraha* is not complex, and clearly does not invoke the multi-valued structure Iyanaga would have us believe. We get no sense from the text of a dual-truth structure, as is explicit in the exegesis of Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan and Ngor-chen. The simple doctrine is that the *dharmadhātu maṇḍala* is the essential means for obtaining enlightenment, that any being—Maheśvara included—may obtain the enlightened condition, and that the *maṇḍala* is the direct expression of salvific reality, established by the eternally awakened Buddha himself. The means for their conversion is the extraordinary power of the living word, the mantra, which is the key to unlocking the palace of awakening. A subtext is that even those killed in the name of religion will be saved in the next life, an idea strictly accepted by early Tibetan religious, and one that may be inferred in India by the subsequent reembodiment of Maheśvara as the *buddha* Bhasmeśvara. Iyanaga was certainly correct in interpreting Maheśvara's death and resurrection as a dramatic symbol for the transformation of defilement into gnosis, but this, too, is a symbolic subtext to the main story line of world-reform through the *maṇḍala* display.

II. Tibetan modification—**Cakrasaṃvara** *and* **Hevajra**

a. We can detect two primary motives for the mythic exegesis of Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan and Ngor-chen: the desire for cosmological and ritual closure at the textual level, and verification of scriptural-lineal authenticity that textual closure provides.

In the case of Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan, closure of mythic and ritual holes in the heritage of the 'Khon family was of primary importance. Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan was instrumental in putting together much of what is now considered the orthodox Sa-skya-pa perspective on the Vajrayāna, and integrated many fragile meditative systems into the widely respected, if pugnaciously secretive, *Lam-'bras*. In this endeavor, he utilized the rule already established by other early teachers in southern Tibet, including his father and elder brother: orthodoxy is verified by a system's Indian antecedents. Where those antecedents were accepted or unassailable, he paid scant attention. Where the antecedents of his system might have been considered controversial, he takes some pains to demonstrate their validity.[45] He did this in a quite systematic way for the *Lam-'bras*, and the development of the Maheśvara subjugation myth appears to have proceeded on similar lines. Clearly, Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan did not invent the application of the myth to the preaching of the *Cakrasaṃvara*. Although not cited by him, commentaries by both Indrabhūti and Śūravajra make the subjugation of Maheśvara part of the lore surrounding the advent of that *tantra*.[46] Yet the jump from the paucity of Indic materials to the well-developed scenario evident in Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan's text is comprehensible if we surmise that the Indic storytellers wove their tales on a speedy loom, for, as I have already indicated, the author declared that he received the story from his teachers. I believe that Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan—already removed by some decades from the Indic and Nepalese sources of his tradition—found himself in possession of an enormous quantity of cosmological, hagiographical, ritual, and meditative material, as did most lineage holders in southern Tibet at this time. The resulting textual production was a response to the fear for the imminent demise of the lore—Tibetans being quite aware of current Islamic incursions—the measure of its quantity, and the need to verify its authenticiy.[47]

This brings us to the second point: the validation of the system as a whole. Contrary to the stereotypes of popular literature, Tibetans have not always been benign, smiling mountaineers. Competition for economic resources traditionally has been intense, and the early Tibetan hagiographical literature clearly indicates an aspect of the culture obsessed with intrigue, black magic, challenges, occasional religious wars, and hostility between certain members of the Buddhist hierarchy. In such an environment, the myth of Maheśvara's subjugation was not, so far as I know, interpreted to allow the suppression of personal enemies—as it might have been, given Christian eschatology of the Antichrist—but was utilized to bolster the position of families and monastic institutions in specific ways.

There were, of course, no serious challenges to the organized monastic structure from devotees of Śiva in Tibet. The myth became instead a vehicle for verifying the greatest concern of institutional Tibetan culture: lineages of authority, a reflection of the extraordinary conservatism of Tibetan civilization. The actual mechanism of verification must appear bizarre. Each of the *maṇḍalas* implicated in the myths under discussion—that is, the Sa-skya use of the Luhipāda *Cakrasaṃvara* meditation and the *Hevajra* maṇḍala of the 'Khon-lugs of *Lam-'bras*—relate that the particular divinities are visualized trampling on Hindu gods and goddesses, in particular Maheśvara. Additionally, Tibetans had passed down oral materials taken from India and Nepal on the internecine strife among Bauddhas, Śaivas and Śāktas, including oral and written information on the mythology of Maheśvara's subjugation. Moreover, the apologia of the written myths of the scriptures' preaching certainly was communicated by the Indian and Nepalese source monasteries: Consequently, Tibetans understood quite well that the verification of their own lineage of meditative praxis was dependent in some measure on the utilization of this myth for the verification of a specific lineage of exegesis. For the exegesis of a scripture to be viable, the scripture itself must be tied to the great cosmic event of the *tantra*'s preaching as a considered act of world reform. Tibetans thus quite handily made the jump from Hindu gods appearing in their *maṇḍalas* as divine throw rugs to the verification of their familial and monastic institutions as designated heirs of cosmic renewal.

Challenges made from one lineage to another in Tibet were usually on exactly these lines: did the tradition in question draw from an authentic Indic Buddhist background or was it tainted with the pollution of heretical lineages through Hindu rather than Buddhist teachers? Tibetans were quite aware that well-meaning members of the Tibetan clergy fell victim to unscrupulous Indian and Nepalese teachers who represented themselves in areas beyond their authority. For example, Kāyastha Gayadhara is said to have misrepresented himself to 'Gos lo-tsa-ba Khug-pa lhas-tsas as being Maitripa in the flesh.[48] Tibetans were equally aware that certain of their own compatriots were not above misrepresenting what they had learned and from whom. Nag-tsho lo-tsā-ba was known to have challenged the claim that Mar-pa studied directly with Nāropa.[49] Thus, the clergy in Tibet continued to question systems and lineages—a system might be authentic but the lineage of instruction questionable or fabricated, or the entire edifice might reflect non-Buddhist values. Moreover, the bickering evident between the Mar-lugs and the Rwa-lugs, between the Rwa-lugs and the 'Gos-lugs, or between such teachers as dGe-bshes Khyung-po grags-se and Zur-chung Shes-rab grags-pa, certainly must have presented the Sa-skya masters with the motivation to limit their own vulnerability.[50]

Although we appear to have no record of a direct challenge to his *Cakrasaṃvara* lineage, Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan, following in the footsteps of his predecessors, did take some pains with the *Cakrasaṃvara* materials at his disposal.[51] He discussed the hagiography of the Indian teachers and their Tibetan followers at some length in three separate works, devoted respectively to the lineages of

Kāṇhāpāda, Ghantapāda, and Luhipāda.[52] The result of Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan's mythic and hagiographic writings was mixed. While gZhon-nu dpal's *Blue Annals* probably made use of his hagiographies, the mythic form of the origin of the *Cakrasaṃvara* explored by Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan was not the one to obtain widest currency in Tibet.[53] Such currency derived from the textual and oral materials assembled and amplified by Bu-ston Rin-chen grub (1290–1364); his version was followed by many subsequent authors.[54]

If closure was Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan's primary concern, defense appeared to be Ngor-chen's. The Sa-skya-pa had enjoyed a special position in Tibet since the middle of the thirteenth century, when Sa-skya Paṇḍita was designated the first monk-ruler of the Snowy Mountain. While the Sa-skya hegemony fragmented around 1358–59 and the Yüan Dynasty collapsed in 1368, the Sa-skya-pa still enjoyed a special position of power and wealth which attracted the criticism of other orders, especially in the face of the excesses of privilege that had occurred.[55] The backlash against the Sa-skya-pa—intellectual as well as political—must have been intense, and the Sa-skya-pa themselves attempted to retain control of Tibet's intellectual direction by polemics. It is between the years 1404–1406 (ages twenty-two to twenty-four) that we find Ngor-chen involved in the first of his two periods of apologetics. In 1404 he wrote his defense of the superiority of Vajrayāna enlightenment—the theory that buddhahood obtained by the Path of Secret Spells is more exalted than that obtained by the standard Mahāyāna perfections.[56] In 1406, he defended the orthodoxy of the *Hevajra-tantra* itself against those who maintained that, because the scripture speaks primarily of all-embracing gnosis and because Virūpa is rumoured to have been the Vijñānavādin monk Dharmapāla before his conversion to the lightning path, the *Hevajra* must be of the class of texts reflecting the "mind only" conceptualization of reality and therefore inferior to the orthodox Madhyamaka view. Although the chronologies are confused, Ngor-chen's hagiographies speak of his defending the Sa-skya-pa position in central Tibet against vociferous critics.[57] Doubtless, his *Amazing Ocean*, written in 1405, also reflected these same concerns, despite the fact that the text is not overtly polemical and does not specifically identify an antagonistic position, as do the 1404 and 1406 apologies.

Who were these *pāramitā*-based critics of the Sa-skya system? Modern Tibetan religious folklore often reifies all Saskya-pa critics into dGe-lugs-pa monks and, in the case of Ngor-chen, into mKhas-grub dge-legs dpal-bzang-po (1385–1438).[58] Certainly, mKhas-grub-rje was one of Ngor-chen's critics in his later life and clearly did maintain, for example, the doctrine that there was no difference in result when buddha-hood is obtained by either the perfections or the Path of Spells.[59] However, the circumstances were more complex than reification into a single antagonist.[60] For example, the dates themselves are difficult—in 1404, mKhas-grub-rje turned 19 years of age and was still a good Sa-skya-pa monk studying with Red-mda'-ba; he did not even visit Tsong-khapa until 1407.[61] Moreover, Tibetan proclivity towards oral exaggeration certainly

exacerbated the problem, some members of the clergy assuming that the refutation of a facet of a practice indicates a wholesale condemnation of the tradition. Red-mda'-ba was a *prajñāpāramitā* master and is said to have held that Dharmapāla's view was idealist, but we have no sense that he extended this critique to the *Hevajra-tantra* itself, although some of his more rash followers may have done so.[62] Clearly, mKhas-grub did not.[63] Exaggeration, in fact, led mKhas-grub to complain that people said he refuted the *Lam-'bras*, a charge he hotly denied—he had called into question two specific practices.[64] However the polemical stage was set: once Ngor-chen produced the verification of the *Hevajra* in its mythic setting, his sense of closure became the standard for Sa-skya-pa savants. We find 'Jam mgon A-mes zhabs, writing his masterpiece of *Lam-'bras* lore in 1621, specifically reproducing Ngor-chen's mythos, relying on his prestige.[65]

b. The literary shift from the snappy dialogue of the *Tattvasaṃgraha* to the cosmic diagram of the *Cakrasaṃvara maṇḍala* is in some measure dependent on the shift from an Indian milieu to the Sa-skya-pa system in Tibet. Whereas rNying-ma-pa authors continued the use of vital dialogue, Sa-skya-pa authors eliminated it in favor of the codification into diagrams. Why the difference? Again, social values and levels are at the heart of the issue. Village culture supports the wandering bard, whose presence serves to alleviate oppressive boredom and whose message imbues meaning into the lives of the audience. Clearly, many rNying-ma-pa literary genres were closely influenced by oral and bardic literature. The Sa-skya-pas, conversely, made the transition to textually-based monastic institutions; their myths directly expressed the importance of verifying the presence of texts in the institution rather than delineating the drama of unfolding awareness. For the rNying-ma-pa, the drama of the struggle in multiple episodes was the focus; for the Sa-skya-pa, the goal of the received text as the epiphany of gnosis was paramount.

Turning to the plot, we notice that Maheśvara and crew are directly included into the *dharmadhātu maṇḍala* of the *Tattvasaṃgraha*, while neither the *Cakrasaṃvara* nor the *Hevajra* utilize Maheśvara or other divinities as anything but adversaries. Both Sa-skya-pa myths make allowance for the ultimate liberation of the Hindu divinities, but neither allows them a formal position in the *maṇḍala* as exemplars following the universal pattern. The Sa-skya-pa formulation more closely follows the paradigm of the Buddha's victory over Māra, and the indebtedness of both the *Cakrasaṃvara* and *Hevajra* episodes to the Māra myth is explicit. Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan specifically introduces his version with a Māra-myth reference; the four figures trampled on by Hevajra are Māra, Maheśvara, Indra, and Brahmā, while HT I.iii.17 is explicit that Hevajra destroys the four Māras. Thus, the dramatic device—of the contentious dialogue among Mahāvairocana, Vajrapāṇi, and Maheśvara, followed by the reincarnation and liberation as denouement—is not essential to the plot. Rather, the given qualities of the individuals, being the ground of conversion, are the essential elements for the unfolding of the drama. Symbolically, this is played out in the

direct imitation of one deity by another: Vajrapāṇi does not imitate Maheśvara, but Heruka does. The iconography is developed in recognition, specified time and again in the texts of the Sa-skya-pa, that the *tantras* of the *Anut-tara-yoga* class have been preached to attract those beings filled with all the various defilements and who do not wish to abandon their preferred behavior.

As a corollary, the later myths imply that the lowest variety of behavior leads to the highest enlightenment. We have every expectation that the tellers of such myths enjoyed the spectacle of the lowest fiends and their dastardly crimes, with the gallant Heruka coming to the rescue of all beings. Clearly, Heruka and his retinue do not enjoy acting in a manner similar to that of Maheśvara but have undertaken this form of divine activity to attract those addicted to perverse behavior. We are thus impressed by how far the Buddha's compassion extends, including even degraded beings. As an antidote to personal guilt, the scenario is as attractive to the myth's listeners as Amitābha's saving power in another era—no one need feel irredeemable, whatever their crimes may have been.

In the *Cakrasaṃvara* system, the exact locales are important, and their specification is an extension of that lineage's concern for the integration of the macrocosm and microcosm, each of the twenty-four external locales being identified with an internal locale within the body of the *yogin*. While the precise Indic source for identifying a system of twenty-four *liṅgams* and *bhairavas* is obscure, it cannot be immediately assumed that it was a popular Hindu system subsumed into the Buddhist fold. Virtually none of the more famous "lingams of light" (*jotirliṅga*) belong to the *Cakrasaṃvara* formula; I have encountered no list in purāṇic literature which corresponds to either the number twenty-four or the places identified. Closest in spirit are the various Buddhist places of pilgrimage specified frequently in most of the *tantras* concerned with *ḍākinīs*: the *Cakrasaṃvara, Abhidhānottara, Hevajra*, etc.[66] The Buddhist mythic contention that these places were initially Śaiva cannot be accepted as fact, or even that they existed outside of the minds of the storytellers, although some clearly did. Instead, the list is developed out of such geographical lists of places noted in esoteric Buddhist literature as early as the *Mahāmāyūrī-vidyā-rajñī-dhāraṇī*.[67]

As a meditative technique, the identity of macrocosmic locales with microcosmic structures is striking. It allows the meditator to understand the cosmic drama as internal as well as external, Maheśvara as an extension of his own proclivity to defilement and Heruka as the resonance of the Buddha in his own stream of being. As literature, the specification of locales is equally dramatic and is a technique frequently used in Indian and Tibetan tales, whether in the *Purāṇas* or the Epic of Ge-sar. For a village-bound audience with little opportunity or resources for travel, the identification of all the places of the known world by the wandering teacher must have seemed at least as romantic and exciting as travel stories are for us today.[68] To find, moreover, that the entire itinerary is located within one's own psycho-physical continuum must have been a stunning validation of the listener's existence.

No such literary devices are available to Ngor-chen; his work invokes neither

the quick repartee of the *Tattvasaṃgraha* nor the grand schematism of Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan's work. In all fairness, the subjugation of Maheśvara is not his real concern; Ngor-chen just wants to get the *tantras* preached and authenticated, so that he can discuss the scriptural relations and proceed to the hagiographies of the saintly lineage. We get little sense that Ngor-chen appreciates the *literature* of his mythic inheritance. Rather, he appears solely concerned with verifying its reality on a scale of values developed by the institutional requirements of his day. As a result, Ngor-chen's is the dryest expression of a juicy story.

c. The doctrinal framework of the Tibetan versions of the myth is explicit and, in the *Hevajra* telling, quite essential to the story. Clearly, the expression of multiple levels of truth—further trifurcated in the *Cakrasaṃvara maṇḍala* into physical, vocal, and mental—brings out the necessity of admitting the mythic reality into the ordinary world. Here, Maheésvara and his retinue really perform all their actions, which are countered by Heruka and his *maṇḍala*: evil is supressed, defilement purified, and the cosmos realigned into the universal form. Much more difficult is the myth as the expression of absolute truth. Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan stresses the drama of subjugation when he extends the movement of reality from Vajradhara to Maheśvara. Conversely, Ngor-chen emphasizes the process of teaching as an act of nondifferentiated communication, although he clearly includes Maheśvara in the ground of being as emblematic of defiled existence. The hermeneutic of mythic nondifferentiation raises a fundamental soteriological and ontological question: If Maheśvara and the demonic horde are merely facets of the teacher's gnosis, then does the absolute body of the Buddha emanate evil?

Ngor-chen attempts to circumvent the problem by maintaining that both pure and impure elements of reality are penetrated by the *dharmakāya*. I find this explanation intellectually problematic. If the entire process of defilement and awakening—either cosmically or personally—operates absolutely undifferentiated from the absolute body of the Buddha, then the Buddhist has as little claim to solve the problem of evil as does the theist. Indeed, the personality and activity of the eternal Buddha come to center stage, since the drama is enacted at his pleasure. If the Buddhist replies that such a drama is a play to lure beings away from defilement, then the equivalence of the microcosm and macrocosm cannot be maintained. In this instance, external defilement is unreal while internal defilement is real; the internality and symbolic reality of the myth are futile and cannot be reenacted in the discharge of personal awakening.

Buddhist soteriology has yet to come to grips with the problems evoked by an open-ended cosmological system. The apparent sophistication of its doctrine still masks an incomplete exploration of the philosophical implications of its mythic structure, partially because it has recourse to a series of soteriological postulates buttressed by the irrefutable invitation to try it for oneself. Yet when the system attempts to identify itself with the ordinary-language images of the individual, which are required in the mythic process, we obtain a curious reversal: the system, as it were, meets itself coming and going—denying the individual while

relying on the individual's self-delusion to eliminate the potential for further delusion. If there are no real individuals, however, we revert to a soteriological autokinesis wherein the absolute deludes itself and awakens itself.

So, while mythically powerful, this inversion of agent, from the individual to the absolute body of the Buddha, is problematic in an intellectual culture of agentlessness. The myth has drawn the tradition into the implications of the identity of the two levels of truth, but bringing the absolute into the operation of relative truth, which reverses the vector of standard Buddhist hermeneutic. Traditionally, Buddhist thought has deconstructed the categories of relative truth to arrive at the identity of the two truths. Here, Buddhist myth constructs categories of the absolute truth in order to arrive at this identity, the absolute taking on characteristics of relative process. So, while Ngor-chen has ignored the myth as literature, his invocation of the doctrine of the Buddha's bodies is quite to the point—the problem is gnostic embodiment as a response of the ultimate. Space prevents a more thorough examination of the issue, but we note that the requirements of textual authenticity and closure propelled Tibetans to a land seldom visited. Exegetes found themselves hovering on the periphery of myth, attempting to manipulate images which did not invoke their ideas while working in a curious twilight between symbol and theory. Yet mitigating the tension between myth and doctrine is Buddhist literature's playful willingness to eradicate ultimate categories and turn the devil into a Buddha with the stroke of a pen.

Conclusions

The extraordinary popularity of the Buddhist myth of the subjugation of Maheśvara—whether at the hands of Vajrapāṇi or Heruka—has much to do with its ability to invoke several levels of meaning simultaneously. As a story, it is a classic tale of Buddhist values, overcoming the power-oriented behaviors still evident among Śaiva and Śākta practitioners. As soteriology, it implies that no depravity is irredeemable; indeed, it affirms that the defiled condition will be answered by the insistent movement towards awakening, becoming finally the stuff of enlightenment itself. As doctrine, particularly in Tibet, it affirms the interpenetration of all elements of reality and their mutual interdependence. And, as history, it leads us to understand the internal and external forces that affected the Buddhist communities in India and Tibet, and gives us more insight into the process whereby Buddhist communities developed tools of identity in the face of fissiparous forces.

Abbreviations

HT David L. Snellgrove, *The Hevajra Tantra*, London Oriental Series Vol. 6 (London: Oxford University Press, 1959).

TTP Daisetz T. Suzuki, ed., *Tibetan Tripiṭaka, Peking Edition* (Tokyo: Tibetan Tripitaka Research Institute, 1956).

SKB bSod-nams rgya-mtsho, ed., *The Complete Works of the Great Masters of the Sa Skya Sect of the Tibetan Buddhism* (Tokyo: Toyo Bunko, 1968).

T. J. Takakusu and K. Watanabe, eds., *Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō* (Tokyo: Daizōkyōkai, 1924–1935).

To. Hakuju Ui, et al., *A Complete Catalogue of the Tibetan Buddhist Cannons* (Sendai: Tōhoku Imperial University, 1934).

Notes

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1 See R.M. Davidson, "An Introduction to the Standards of Scriptural Authenticity in Indian Buddhism," in Robert E. Buswell, Jr., ed., *Chinese Buddhist Apocrypha* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1990), pp. 291–325.

2 Davidson, "Standards," pp. 312–315. For a convenient discussion of the various lineages, see Kong-sprul Yon-tan rgya-mtsho, *Shes bya kun khyab*, rDo-rje rgyal-po and Thub-bstan nyi-ma, eds. (Szechuan: Mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1982), vol. 1, pp. 366–371.

3 Compare the founding scenarios found in the *Vimalaprabhā* with the references in the *Sekoddeśa-ṭīkā*; Jagannatha Upadhyaya, ed., *Vimalaprabhāṭīkā of Kalki Śrī Puṇḍarīka*, Bibliotheca Indo-Tibetica Series No. XI (Sarnath, India: Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies, 1986), pp. 22–31; Mario E. Carelli, ed., *Sekoddeśaṭīkā of Nāḍapādā*, Gaekwad's Oriental Series No. XC (Baroda, India: Oriental Institute, 1941), pp. 1–4. See André Bareau, "Le stūpa de Dhānya Kaṭaka," *Arts asiatiques* 16 (1967): 81–88; Helmut Hoffman, *Tibet—A Handbook* (Bloomington, Indiana: Research Center for the Language Sciences, n.d.), pp. 143–145.

4 The text of the *Tattvasaṃgraha* is that edited by Isshi Yamada, *Sarvatathāgata-Tattva-saṅgraha*, Śatapiṭaka Series 262 (New Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture, 1980) and reproduced in Lokesh Chandra, ed., *Sarva-Tathāgata-Tattva-Saṅgraha* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1987). Lokesh Chandra's "edition" simply added misprints to Yamada's fine edition, which is now unavailable. The Tibetan of the *Tattvasaṃgraha* is PTT. 112, vol. 4, pp. 218–283; the standard Chinese text is T.882.18.341–445. The Sarvārthasiddhi myth is pp. 4–5 of Chandra's text; Tibetan text is pp. 219.4–220.2; and pp. 341c–342b of the Chinese.

5 Chandra ed. pp. 211–213; Tib. pp. 281.4–282.4; Ch. 443b–444c.

6 The following is a summary of the essential sections of the myth, which is found at Chandra pp. 56–59; Tib. pp. 239.4–241.5; Ch. 370a–372c. The critical reader will realize that I have taken some poetic license with the language to reflect the quick repartee of the Sanskrit. The myth was first studied by Giuseppe Tucci, who discovered the *Tattvasaṃgraha* manuscript in Nepal; he edited and translated much of the text of the myth in *Indo-Tibetica*, Reale Accademia d'Italia Studi e Documenti I (Rome: Reale Accademia d'Italia, 1932), vol. 1, pp. 135–145. The myth has been considered in detail and summarized by Nobumi Iyanaga, "Récits de la soumission de

Maheśvara par Trailokyavijaya—d'après les sources chinoises et japonaises," in Michel Strickmann, ed., *Tantric and Taoist Studies in Honour of R.A. Stein*, Mélanges chinois et bouddhiques vol. XXII (Brussels: Institut belge des hautes études chinoises, 1985), pp. 633–745. Unfortunately, Iyanaga's excellent study does not capture the snappy dialogue of the Sanskrit, being based primarily on the ponderous Sung translation into Chinese, T. 882. The material has been also considered by Stein, *Annuaire du Collège de France* 1972:499–510, 1973:463–470, 1974:508–517. A noted Tibetan discussion of the Maheśvara (Rudra) myth is that by sLe-lung-pa bZhad pa'i rdo rje, *Dam can bstan srung rgya mtsho'i rnam par thar pa cha shas tsam brjod pa sngon med legs bshad*, Sman Rtsi Shesrig Spendzod vol. 104 (Leh, Ladakh: T.S. Tashigang and B.P.O. Nemo, 1979), pp. 1–103.

7 In using Bhasmācchanna, I am following Tucci's text, p. 145, and Iyanaga, p. 675, who gives the readings of the edition of Horiuchi Kanjin, *(BonZō-Kan taishō) Shoe-Kongō-chō-kyō no kenkyū* Bompon Kōtei-hen, jo (Kōyasan, 1983), IIIa, p. 32. Chandra, p. 59, gives Bhasmacchatrā. It is well-known that Śiva's conversion as Bhasmeśvara occurs in *Kāraṇḍavyūha*, in P.L. Vaidya, ed., *Mahāyāna-sūtra-saṃgraha*, Part 1, Buddhist Sanskrit Text Series, No. 17 (Darbhanga: Mithila Institute, 1961), p. 304, but see Iyanaga's p. 675, n. 66, where he indicates that, whatever its occurrence in the Nepali manuscript tradition, it was missing in the recensions translated into Tibetan and Chinese.

8 T. 1171, 1172. The authenticity of Amoghavajra's translations is frequently disputed; see Iyanaga, "Récits," pp. 640–642. The Tibetan text is To. 482, and the myth is found in sDe-dge rgyud-'bum vol. *ta*, fols. 10a–12b. sLelung-pa, pp. 10.7 & 13.6, attempts to integrate the rather innocuous statements of the *Mahāvairocana-abhisambodhi-sūtra* (To. 494) into the full-blown form of the myth, but the *sūtra* simply confounds Māra and Maheśvara, giving a mantra to bring him under control; sDe-dge rgyud'bum, vol. *tha*, fol. 182a.

9 sDe-dge rgyud-'bum, vol. *ta*, fol. 11b: *gang 'di lta bu'i sngags kyi tshig smra ba ni khyod rab tu mi bgrongs so*|.

10 To. 480; sDe-dge rgyud-'bum, vol. *nya*, fols. 237a–247b.

11 sDe-dge rgyud'bum, vol. *ja*, fols. 281a–287a.

12 To. 832, rNying rgyud, vol. *kha*, fols. 124b–128a. R.A. Stein has considered this version in the *Annuaire* 1974, pp. 511.

13 To. 829; rNying-rgyud, vol. *ka*, chapters 20–31, fols. 135b–166a. This material has been considered by Stein, *Annuaire* 1972:499–510, 1973:463–470. See also sLe-lung-pa, *Dam can bstan srung rgya misho*, pp. 48–103.

14 Stein, *Annuaire* 1973, p. 468, mentions that there is a commentary ascribed to Nāropa which contains a fuller version, but I have no access to the Peking *bsTan-'gyur* at this time. This version is not cited by Grags-pa rgyalmtshan, Bu-ston, sLe-lung-pa, or other Tibetan savants whom I have studied, and so its influence was less than complete, yet Stein mentions that Pretapuri in "Nāropa's commentary" is identified with Pu-hrangs in Tibet, an identification that Bu-ston accepts, *bDe mchog nyung ngu'i rgyud kyi spyi rnam don gsal*, Lokesh Chandra, ed., *The Collected Works of Bu-ston*, Śatapiṭaka Series, vol. 64 (New Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture, 1971), pt. 6, pp. 54–61.

15 *dPal he ru ka'i byung tshul*, SKB III.298.4.2–300.2.6.

16 The division of Maheśvara's retinue into celestial, terrestrial, and subterranean is evident in the *Tattvasaṃgraha* mythology also; Chandra, pp. 59–60.

17 I have edited the place names; the versions found in the text are clearly orally transmitted and are meant to reflect the widely accepted names for the twenty-four locales found in the *Cakrasaṃvara* system. Confer HT I.vii.10–18; *Abhidhānottara*, PTT 17, vol. 2, pp. 48.1.1–4, 52.5.6–53.2.3, 56.1.6–56.2.3, 56.5.8–57.2.1, 58.4.4–59.2.8, etc.;

Tucci, *Indo-Tibetica*, vol. 3, part 2, pp. 38–45; Shinichi Tsuda, *The Saṃvarodaya-Tantra: Selected Chapters* (Tokyo: The Kokuseido Press, 1974), pp. 93–96, 260–263.

18 It is not clear why Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan specifies that these two *yakṣa* came from the north to take control of these two locales, or why he does that selectively in other instances (*nāgas, asuras*). Most likely, it is the conservation of a prior association on his part (did all these figures have such associations?); it is less likely that he is selectively developing associations found in the *sādhanas* in question.

19 Color assignment here contradicts the names of the Umā, which identify each Umā with her own color.

20 I have not observed elsewhere the identification of a goddess with vicissitudes of the planet Rāhu, rendering the stem feminine. The asterisked (*) Indic forms of the names ascribed to the Umā and the Mātṛkā are conjectural.

21 We note the irregular application of the feminine ending *mo*.

22 The first four Mātṛkā names are available from the literature. See Martin M. Kalff, "Ḍākinīs in the Cakrasamvara Tradition," in Martin Brauen and Per Kvaerne, eds., *Tibetan Studies* (Zürich: Völkerkundemuseum der Universität Zürich, 1978), pp. 149–162, esp. p. 157; Tsuda, *Saṃvarodaya* XIII.30, pp. 117, 285. According to these sources, the other four Mātṛkā are most commonly identified as Yamadāḍhī, Yamadūtī, Yamadaṁṣṭrī, and Yamamathanī.

23 The numbering: 24 Bhairavas + their 24 consorts + 4 Umā + 8 Mātṛkā + Maheśvara + Umādevī = 62 divinities.

24 While the *maṇḍala* utilized by Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan appears the general synthesis of the four traditions mentioned at the end of the text, in the 1730-s edition of the SKB, our text follows the hagiography of Luhipāda's lineage, leading to the surmise that the Zhu-chen Tshul-khrims considered the *maṇḍala* to be based on Luhipāda's *Śrī Bhagavadabhisamaya* (To. 1427, sDe-dge rgyud 'grel, vol. wa, fols. 186b3–193al). This text is apparently the earliest attested practice of the *Cakrasaṃvara*, having been translated by Rin-chen bzang-po (958–1055) and Śraddhākaravarman. It also enjoys two commentaries by *Tathāgatavajra, To. 1509–1510, the latter including a separate chronicle of Paṇḍita dPal-'dzin and the teachers of the lineage. A form of the *maṇḍala* is also given in Benoytosh Bhattacharyya, ed., *Niṣpannayogāvalī of Mahāpaṇḍita Abhyākaragupta*, Gaekwad's Oriental Series No. 109 (Baroda: Oriental Institute, 1972), pp. 44–46, 26–29.

25 A *preta* is one departed, but usually a ghost rather than a corpse. Here, as before, Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan is attempting to tie the myth to the language of the ritual.

26 This was a favored hermeneutic among the Sa-skya-pa. Sa-chen had maintained that it was one of the signs of the superiority of the Vajrayāna (SKB I.122.3.3), an idea also utilized by bSod-nams rtse-mo in his commentary on the *Hevajra-tantra* (SKB II.51.2.6–3.2). In the previous reference, however, Sachen quotes Padmavajra's *Guhyasiddhi* (To. 2217) in support of his idea, and we see that Puṇḍarīka maintains the idea in his *Vimalaprabhā* commentary to the *Kālacakra*, Upadhyaya ed., pp. 23–24. Decidedly, the Sa-skya teachers looked for Indic support of favored doctrines.

27 The received Sanskrit text of *Guhyasamāja* XVII.19, while discussing Vajrapāṇi, reads somewhat differently:

> *kāyavajro bhavet brahmā vāgvajras tu maheśvaraḥ /*
> *cittavajradharo rājā saiva viṣṇur maharddhikaḥ //*
> Being physically adamantine, let him be Brahmā,
> But as vocally adamantine, he is Maheśvara;
> The king bearing the sceptre of mental adamant,
> It is just he who is Viṣṇu, of great majesty.

Yukei Matsunaga, *The Guhyasamāja Tantra* (Osaka: Toho Shuppan, 1978), p. 98.

28 *Dpal he ru ka'i byung tshul rnam par gzhag pa bla ma'i gsung las cung zad blus te* |. SKB III.300.2.6.
29 *sNgon byung gi rnam 'phrul*, SKB I.388.3.4–389.1.3.
30 Sa-chen was doubtless considering his various commentaries to the basic texts of the *Lam-'bras* (To. 2284), traditionally considered eleven in number; see Musashi Tachikawa, "The Tantric Doctrine of the Sa skya pa according to the *Śel gyi me loṅ*," *Acta Asiatica* 29 (1975): 95–106.
31 Actually, as is apparent from his *gDan gyi rnam dag* (SKB I.387.4.4–388.3.4), Heruka tramples on Brahmā, Indra, Kāmadeva, and Maheśvara, while Ghasamrī tramples on Īśāna-Maheśvara, apparently considered the principal variety of the species Maheśvara.
32 The same method was utilized by Ngor-chen in his exegetical monument, the (*dPal kye rdo rje'i sgrub thabs kyi rgya cher bshad pa*) *bsKyed rim gnad kyi zla zer*, SKB IX.173.4–277, esp. see p. 179.3.6.
33 The standard work on the legends and concerns of the *Lam-'bras* remains the *Yongs rdzogs bstan pa rin po ch'i nyams len gyi man ngag gsung ngag rin po che'i byon tshul khog phub dang bcas pa rgyas par bshad pa legs bshad'dus pa'i rgya mtsho* of Jam-mgon A-mes zhabs (1597–1659; text completed 1621), *The Tshogs Bsad Tradition of the Sa-skya Lam-'bras* vol. 1 (Rajpur, India: Sakya Centre, 1983), pp. 1–314; cf. Ngor-chen's introductory materials at the beginning of the *bsKyed rim gnad kyi zla zer* (SKB.IX, pp. 174 ff.), and his own discussion of the central Path/Fruit tradition, the *Lam 'bras bu dang bcas pa'i man ngag gi byung tshul gsung ngag rin po che bstan pa rgyas pa'i nyi 'od* (SKB IX.108.3.1–126.4.3); this latter text includes supplemental notes by Gung ru Shes rab bzang po.
26 *rGyud kyi rgyal po dpal kye rdo rje'i byung tshul dang brgyud pa'i bla ma dam pa rnams kyi rnam par thar pa ngo mtshar rgya mtsho*, SKB IX.278.1–284.3.3. The Synopsis addresses the material in pp. 278.3.2–281.4.5.
27 The resultant form of a divinity is that which is brought back from integration with emptiness at a specific time in the meditative practice of the *utpattikrama*. See Ngor-chen's *bsKyed-rim gnad kyi zla-zer*, SKB IX.249.1.6–251.1.3.
36 Ngor-chen's primary source for the myth is Sa-chen's text, which he partially misquotes and identifies as *gDan gyi dag pa*, this latter being placed before (387.4.4–388.3.4) Sa-chen's *sNgon byung gi rnam 'phrul* in the SKB edition, the quote being from 388.4.3–4. Secondarily, he quotes from Grags-pa rgyalmtshan's commentary to the *Hevajra-tantra*, SKB III.151.4.6–152.1.1, itself a development of HT II.v.5.
37 Ngor-chen's statement 279.3.4 is an obscure but definite reference to *Hevajra tantra* II.v.5, which was not translated by Snellgrove:

> *cumbayitvā tu Nairātmyāṃ kṣiptvā vajraṃ kapālake* |
> *mardayitvā stanau devo maṇḍalaṃ saṃprakāśayet* ||
> Having kissed Nairātmyā, having placed your vajra in her skull,
> Having fondled her breasts, let the deity express his maṇḍala.

38 *vyākhyātāham ahaṃ dharmaḥ śrotāhaṃ sugaṇair yutaḥ* /
sādhyo 'haṃ jagataḥ śāstā loko 'haṃ laukiko 'py ahaṃ //

We should note that the Tibetan for HT II.ii.39cd reads as if *śāstā 'loko 'ham laukiko*: *'jig rten 'jig rten 'das ma nga*, but here following the *Yogaratnamālā*, HT, vol. 2, p. 139.
39 See note 6, above.
40 Stein, *Annuaire* 1973, p. 467; Iyanaga, "Récit de la soumission de Maheśvara," pp. 731–743.
41 André Bareau, "Le Buddha et Uruvilvā," in Daniel Donnet, ed., *Indiantsme et Bouddhisme—Mélanges offerts à Mgr Étienne Lamotte*, Publications de l'Institut oriental-

iste de Louvain 23 (Louvain-la-Neuve: Institut orientaliste, 1980), pp. 1–18. Bareau has theorized that the Kāśyapa episode was initially non-Buddhist and became the mythic anchor which brought the identification of *bodhivṛkṣa* to the village of Uruvilvā. His theory is interesting but exceeds the data at this time and needs more verification than he has offered.

42 See Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan's various *Cakrasaṃvara* lineage hagiographies listed in note 52. below; his *bLa ma rgya gar ba'i lo rgyus* (SKB III.170.1.1–174.1.6).

43 Cf. the treatment of these *asuras* in Thomas B. Coburn, *Devī-Māhātmya—The Crystallization of the Goddess Tradition* (Columbia, Missouri: South Asia Books, 1985), pp. 230–249.

44 *Mahāvairocana-abhisambodhi-sūtra*, To. 494, sDe-dge rgyud-'bum, vol. *tha*, fol. 182a.

45 Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan's great formulation of the Vajrayāna is found in his *rGyud kyi mngon par rtogs pa rin po che'i ljon shing*, SKB III.1–70.

46 See *Śrīcakrasamvaratantrarājasaṃbarasamuccaya-vṛtti*, To. 1413, rgyud-'grel, vol. *tsa* fol. 4ab; *Mūlatantrahṛdayasaṃgrahābhidhānottaratantra-mūlamūlavṛtti*, To. 1414, rgyud-'grel, vol. *tsa* fol. 121a7.

47 See, for example, the rationale given in his *gSung ngag rin po che lam 'bras bu dan bcas pa'i don gsal bar byed pa glegs bam gyi dkar chags, The Slob Bsad Tradition of the Sa-skya Lam-'bras* (Rajpur: Sakya Centre, 1983), vol. XI, pp. 1–8, esp. p. 1.3–2.1.

48 See the *bLa ma brgyud pa'i rnam par thar pa ngo mtshar snang ba* of bLama dam-pa bSod-nams rgyal-mtshan (1312–1375), the first part of his extraordinary *Pod nag ma, The Slob Bsad*, vol. XVI, pp. 1–121, esp. p. 20.

49 Nag-tsho maintained that he visited Nāropa (providing us with a stunning portrait of Nāropa as the Mahāpaṇḍita) and that Nāropa was said to have passed away with great portents while Nag-tsho was accompanying Atīśa in Nepal in C.E. 1041. Sometime later, Nag-tsho traveled with Mar-pa to central Tibet and heard nothing of a meeting. Finally, some of Mar-pa's disciples denied that a meeting had taken place. Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan appears to agree in his reply to Byang-chub seng-ge's request for his opinion on the matter; *rNal 'byor byang chub seng ge'i zhu ba dang / de'i dris lan*, SKB III.276.3.5–278.2.6.

50 George N. Roerich, *The Blue Annals* (Reprint, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1976), pp. 118–121. The biography of Rwa lo-tsā-ba rDo-rje grags by Bande Ye-shes seng-ge, *mThu stobs dbyang phyug rje btsun rwā lo tsa ba'i rnam par thar pa kun khyab snyan pa'i rnga sgra*, (Lhasa xylograph: 1905) presents a wealth of stories concerning early Tibetan religious intrigue, esp. fols. 22b1–24a1, 26b1–27a5, 39b6–40b3, 46a5–47a5, 62b2–63b2, 70a3–70b3, 74a5–75b4, 93a6–94b4, 97a1, 99b1–100a1, 106a4–108b2, 112b5–114a2, 117a5–118a2, 121b3–122b2, 129a4–129b3, 135a3. We note that Rwa-lo's biographer has Rwalo claim to have killed 13 *sngags-'dzin* (holders of spells) by magic, fol. 136a1. Rwa-lo does become involved in a dispute with unnamed clerics at Sa-skya, fol. 56b1–3, but the burden of proof is on him rather than them.

51 His father, Sa-chen Kun-dga' snying-po (1092–1158), had already written one hagiographical chronicle of his version of the Kāṇhapāda lineage; *bDe mchog nag po pa'i lugs kyi bla ma brgyud pa'i lo rgyus*, SKB I.214.1.1–216.4.1.

52 Kāṇhapāda's is hidden at the beginning of his *Nag po dkyil chog gi bshad sbyar*, SKB III.304.3.2–326.3.6, esp. 304.3.4–306.2.2; Ghantapāda's is in *sLob dpon rdo rje dril bu pa'i lo rgyus*, SKB III.345.1.1–346.1.4; Luhipāda's is found in *bDe mchog lu hi pa'i lugs kyi bla ma brgyud pa'i lo rgyus*, SKB III.293.2–298.4. The latter text is also apparently the final production, referring to the other two, SKB III.295.1.2–3.

53 Cf. the *bDe-mchog lu hi pa'i lugs* with the Saṃvara section of Roerich, *Blue Annals*, pp. 380–82; Dung dkar bLo-bzang 'phrin-las, ed., *Deb ther sngon po* (Szechuan: Mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1984), vol. I, pp. 460–464.

54 Found in his general introduction to the material in the *Cakrasaṃvara, bDe mchog nyung ngu'i rgyud kyi spyi rnam don gsal*, Lokesh Chandra, ed., *The Collected Works of Bu-ston*, Śatapiṭaka Series, vol. 64 (New Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture, 1971), pt. 6, pp. 54–61. 'Ba'-ra-ba (1310–1391, according to the *Blue Annals*, p. 692), *A Tibetan Enclyclopedia of Buddhist Scholasticism: The Collected Writings of 'Ba'-ra-ba rGyal mtshan dpal bzang* (Dehradun: Ngawang Gyaltsen and Ngawang Lungtok, 1970), vol. 1, pp. 452–459. Kongsprul, *Shes bya kun khyab*, vol. 1, pp. 369–70. sLe-lung-pa, *Dam can bstan srung rgya mtsho*, vol. 1, pp. 14–16 maintains that his source is Bu-ston's *Chos-'byung*, but I have not located the myth there.

55 See Tsepon W.D. Shakabpa, *Tibet: A Political History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967), pp. 75–82 for the fragmentation of Sa-skya power. A close inspection of the Yüan / Sa-skya relation has been given by L. Petech, "Princely Houses of the Yüan Period Connected with Tibet," in Tadeusz Skorupski, ed., *Indo-Tibetan Studies—Papers in honour of Professor D.L. Snellgrove*, Buddhica Britannica Series Continua II (Tring, U.K.: The Institute of Buddhist Studies, 1990), pp. 257–269.

56 *Zung 'jug rdo rje 'chang chen po'i sa mtshams rnam par bshad pa log rtog ngan sel*, written at Sa-skya, SKB IX.164.2.5–172.2.6.

57 Primary is dKon-mchog dbang-phyug's *sNyigs dus kyi rdo rje 'chang chen po chos kyi rje kun dga' bzang po'i rnam par thar pa mdor bsdus pa, Lam 'bras slob bshad*, vol. 1, pp. 432–473, esp. 462; also see the pasticcio of Sangs-rgyas phun-tshogs, *rDo rje 'chang kun dga' bzang po'i rnam par thar pa legs bshad chu bo 'dus pa'i rgya mtsho, sLob bshad*, vol. 1, pp. 475–585, esp. pp. 537, 546.

58 Mark Tatz has encountered similar difficulties in attempting to discover Tsong-kha-pa's opponents, "Whom is Tsong-kha-pa Refuting in His *Basic Path to Awakening*?" in Lawrence Epstein and Richard F. Sherburne, eds., *Reflections on Tibetan Culture—Essays in Memory of Turrell V. Wylie*, Studies in Asian Thought and Religion, Volume 12 (Lewiston / Queenston / Lampeter: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1990), pp. 149–163.

59 See his *dPal brtag pa gnyis pa'i rnam par bshad pa rdo rje mkha' 'gro ma rnams kyi gsang ba'i mdzod*, in *The Collected Works of The Lord mKhas Grub Rje Dge Legs Dpal Bzang Po*, rJe yab sras gsum gyi gsung 'bum 27 (New Delhi: Mongolian Lama Gurudeya, 1980), vol. 9, pp 469–961, esp. pp. 481–515.

60 See, for example, Go-ram bSod-nams seng-ge's commentary on and defense of the *bsKyed rim gnad kyi zla zer, dPal kye rdo rje'i sgrub pa'i thabs kyi rgya cher bshad pa bskyed rim gnad kyi zla zer la rtsod pa spong ba gnad kyi gsal byed*, in *Kun mkhyen go bo rab 'byams pa bsod nams seng ge bka' 'bum* (Rajpur: Sakya College, 1979), vol. 12, pp. 557–693, esp. p. 560, where Ngor-chen's primary opponents are listed as sLob-dpon chen-po dPal chos-pa, mKhas-grub, and dPal 'jigsmed grags-pa.

61 See his biography, *mKhas grub thams cad mkhyen pa'i rnam thar mkhas pa'i yid 'phrog*, in *The Collected Works of The Lord mKhas Grub Rje*, vol. 1, p. 8.

62 Red-mda'-ba's name is identified with this position in a note (*mchan*) to Ngor-chen's *bsKyed rim gnad kyi zla zer*, SKB 9.176.3.2.

63 Everything mKhas-grub says in his *dPal brtag pa gnyis pa'i rnam par bshad pa* leads us to believe that he thought the *Hevajra-tantra* fully in conformity with fifteenth-century Tibetan comprehension of Madhyamaka; see esp. pp. 559–560.

64 He relates the course of events in a letter included in his *Thor-bu, Collected Works*, vol. 7, pp. 775–808. In his discussion of *Guhyasamāja* meditation, *rGyud thams bcad kyi rgyal po dpal gsang ba 'dus pa'i bskyed rim dngos grub rgya mtsho, Collected Works*, vol. 9, pp. 1 ff., esp. p. 238, he had generally refuted the *Lam 'bras* ideas of the physical *maṇḍala (lus-dkyil)* and the reception of consecration during meditation (*lam dus kyi dbang*), without citing the system by name. He complains (*Thor-bu*, p. 776–7) that everyone jumped to conclusions. Given the inflammatory language mKhas-grub was wont to use, it is easy to see how such an impression developed.

65 *Lam'bras khog phub*, p. 70.5.
66 Confer HT 1.vii.10–18, *Abhidhānottara*, PTT 17, vol. 2, pp. 48.1.1–4, 52.5.6–53.2.3, 56.1.6–56.2.3, 56.5.8–57.2.1, 58.4.4–59.2.8, etc.
67 Cf. T. 982–988. Shuyo Takubo, ed., *Ārya-Mahā-Māyūrī Vidyā Rajñī*, Tokyo: Tokyo Sankibo, 1972. Sylvain Lévi, "Le Catalogue des Yakṣa dans le Mahā-māyūrī," *Journal Asiatique* 1915: 19–138; P.C. Bagchi, "The Geographical Catalogue of the Yakṣas in the Mahāmāyūrī," *Sino-Indian Studies* III 1/2 (1947): 13–87.
68 I presume that there were village-level applications of the *Cakrasaṃvara* myth both before and after it entered the monastic milieu, even if the version under discussion is textual/monastic in form.

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TIBETAN SCHOLASTIC EDUCATION AND THE ROLE OF SOTERIOLOGY

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The hermeneutical and rhetorical dimensions of commentary

Education is not the mere handing down of knowledge but the active developing of the person through the internalization of a tradition's content. If this process begins in the Tibetan monastic education with the acquisition of basic literacy and the heuristic of memorization, it continues with the hermeneutical practices aimed at appropriating the content of tradition as a basis for the cultivation of virtues. In general, hermeneutics can be defined as the art of interpretation systematically analyzed from a philosophical or methodological point of view. Tibetan scholastic educational activities are hermeneutical in that they are reflective interpretive practices that aim to understand the content of the root-texts used as bases of the educational process and their commentaries. These root-texts are themselves commentaries that are memorized and studied in the light of further commentaries. The interpretation of commentaries is thus one form that hermeneutical practice takes in the Tibetan Buddhist tradition. It is not, however, the only or even necessarily the main one, for a remarkable feature of much Tibetan scholastic education is the importance of dialectical debates. They sustain the students in their investigations and lead to an in-depth comprehension of the tradition. Dialectical debates, together with commentary, represent the two central aspects of the hermeneutical practices that form the core of Tibetan scholastic education.

A study of the interpretive practices of a tradition cannot focus, however, only on the interpreted message. It must also examine the audience to which this message is addressed and the way in which the author or transmittor of this message intends to influence its audience. To interpret means to clarify, explicate, explain, but also to translate, render, and transpose. Interpretation is the work of an interpreter, a go-between, who mediates between an author and an

audience (in some cases himself or herself). Interpretation, as Mailloux puts it, "conveys the sense of a translation pointed in two directions simultaneously: *toward* a text to be interpreted and *for* an audience in need of interpretation."[1] Hence, a study of the interpretive practices of Tibetan scholasticism must take into account this double orientation and consider the semantic as well as the pragmatic or performative dimensions of interpretive practices. Such a study must understand these practices not only hermeneutically but rhetorically as well. The tradition is not a pure content but acquires its significance only in relation to the way in which it is used.

In one sense, it is tempting and not entirely wrong to assimilate commentary to the semantic aspect and debate to the pragmatic or performative dimension. Nevertheless, as we will see, this distinction is not adequate to the understanding of either form of interpretive practice. Commentary, which is our present focus, cannot be understood merely through an examination of its content. Like other types of text, commentary is not just descriptive but also performative. The commentator seeks to do something by writing his text and, more importantly for our purpose, the tradition or institution that uses his text is also trying to do something through the study of his words. We could speak here of textual communities, that is, actual social entities formed around common uses of basic texts and their commentaries. When people engage in common interpretive practices, they develop a sense of solidarity, of belonging to a distinct community with its own worldview, ethos and sense of identity. In this way, common interpretive practices provide the focus for further institutionalization and the development of rules. They also become the means through which new members are introduced to the community.[2]

Here I examine the pragmatic uses of texts and commentaries in the context of Tibetan Buddhist scholastic education. I approach this education by examining its curriculum, focusing on the use of texts rather than their content. In doing so, I follow a comparative approach in order to avoid the danger of focusing too narrowly on a single tradition, which is then taken to represent Tibetan tradition as a whole. I examine the curriculum of two types of institution which include most of Tibetan scholastic education, the dGe lugs (pron., ge-luk) monastic university exemplified here by Se rwa (se-ra), which can be described as a debating institution (*rtsod grwa*), and the commentarial institution (*bshad grwa*) exemplified by the rNying ma (nying-ma) monastery of rNam grol gling (Nam-dröl-ling), which is typical of non-dGe lugs institutions of higher learning.[3]

My examination of the dGe lugs and rNying ma versions of the scholastic curriculum follows a two step approach. I first provide a general comparison, following the classical method of delineating similarities and dissimilarities, between the curriculum of these institutions. In this way I show the nature of the two types of educational institutions that have dominated the Tibetan scholastic tradition. I then examine the curriculum more closely by focusing on one of its central topics, the study of the path, and inquiring into its role in the overall education. I show that in the Tibetan scholastic traditions this kind of topic, which

concerns the practice of meditation, is important less for its direct relevance to meditative practice than for its contribution to the construction of a universe in which Buddhist practice becomes meaningful. I conclude by emphasizing the doctrinal nature of such construction and argue that this reliance on doctrine for the elaboration of a religious universe is one of the main characteristics of scholastic education.

The structure of the curriculum of a dGe lugs institution

Se rwa is typical of the great institutions of higher learning that have constituted the intellectual strength of the dGe lugs tradition. Founded in 1419 by 'Jam chen chos rje (jam-chen-chö-jay), one of Tsong-kha-pa's (dzong-ka-ba) main disciples, it became a very large monastery in Tibet with more than ten thousand monks in the 1950s, possibly up to a third of them taking part in scholarly activities. It is now relocated in Bylakuppe, in South-India, not too far from Mysore, where it is becoming large again (well over three thousand) due to a recent influx of new refugees from Tibet.

The Se rwa curriculum[4] does not differ substantially from that of the other dGe lugs institutions of higher learning. The dGe lugs curriculum in its different version largely consists of the study of *five texts* (*po ti lnga*), which summarize the exoteric aspects of the tradition, and the study of tantric texts, particularly those pertaining to the *Guhya-samāja* (*gsang ba 'dus pa*) cycle.[5] This curriculum can be divided in three parts.

1) The first preliminary part is devoted to the mastery of the techniques and basic concepts necessary to the practice of debates. During this period, which can be as short as one year and as long as four or five years, monks are trained in the art of debate through the study of the Collected Topics. They are also introduced to the basic logical and epistemological notions that they will use throughout their studies. The texts used are textbooks (*yig cha*), specific to the college within the monastic institution.

- Collected Topics (*bsdus grwa*) in three parts
- Types of Mind (*blo rigs*)
- Types of Evidence (*rtags rigs*)

This preliminary study is often completed by an introduction to the study of doxography, which examines Buddhist and non-Buddhist tenet systems, and a Paths and Stages (*sa lam*) text, so that the students have a good idea of these aspects of the tradition. This part of curriculum is a preparation for the main part, the study of the five treatises. It aims at developing reasoning abilities. It also provides the student with the basic philosophical vocabulary required for the rest of the studies, but does not aim to bring to students any in-depth comprehension.

2) The second and central part is the study of the five great exoteric texts. It is subdivided into two phases: a) The main part which consists of the study of three texts that are considered to summarize the main aspects of nontantric Buddhism as understood by the dGe lugs tradition:

- *Abhisamayālaṃkara*[6] (*Ornament of Realization*) attributed to Maitreya
- Candrakīrti's *Madhyamakāvatāra*[7] (*Introduction to the Middle Way*)
- Dharmakīrti's *Pramāṇavārttika*[8] (*Commentary on Valid Cognition*)

Together with Nāgārjuna's *Treatise of the Middle Way*,[9] which is studied in the light of Candrakīrti's *Introduction*, these texts provide the doctrinal and philosophical core of the dGe lugs tradition. They are considered the most important texts and studied with great care for a period of six to ten years. The students start with the *Abhisamayālaṃkara* (henceforth the *Ornament*), which is studied for four to six years. This text provides an understanding of the Buddhist and more particularly Mahāyāna worldview together with a detailed analysis of the path, as we will see shortly. Dharmakīrti's *Commentary*, which present an extensive view of Buddhist logic, epistemology and philosophy of language, is studied together with the *Ornament*, during special sessions (one or two months every year). This text is very important, for it provides the philosophical methodology for the whole curriculum. After being already well trained, students are ready to examine what is considered the most profound topic of the studies, Madhyamaka philosophy. Through the study of these three plus one texts, the students are introduced to the sharp philosophical mode of thinking particularly valued by this tradition. Sometimes, monks who are keenly intent on leading the heremitic life leave the monastery after finishing the study of these three texts. Although they could still benefit from further studies, they are considered well trained and able to start on their meditative career.

b) The auxiliary and concluding part of the exoteric curriculum brings more maturity to the already philosophically well trained students through the study of the last two treatises:

- Vasubandhu's *Abhidharma-koṣa*[10] (*Treasury of Abhidharma*)
- Gunaprabha's *Vinaya-sūtra*[11]

These texts bring to the students a grasp of some of the doctrinal and practical backgrounds of Buddhism. The study of the Abhidharma enriches the students' understanding of the Buddhist worldview and the kind of spiritual perspective that this world enables. The study of the Vinaya completes the monastic curriculum by training the students in the intricacies of monastic discipline and the collective organization of the monastic order. Thus both texts are important but contribute little to the kind of intellectual sharpness that the tradition, and Tibetan scholars in general, particularly value. Hence, they are thought to be less important, though

their studies take a long time (from four to eight years). The reason for this extended period is due to several considerations. The amount of textual material is large, but the main reason is to keep students, who are by then advanced scholars, in residence so that they themselves become teachers and share their knowledge before leaving the monastery. It is only after the completion of these studies that students are allowed to stand for the different levels of the title of Geshe (*dge bshes*), which brings to an end the exoteric part of the training.

3) Finally, the last part of the studies concerns the esoteric domain of the tantras. Tantras are not included in the official curriculum of monastic universities such as Se rwa. Monks who finish their studies and become Geshe are required to spend some time in a separate college devoted to the study and practice of tantra. This does not mean that these monks have not studied tantra before, for almost all of them have, but such a study is considered private and hence not part of the official curriculum.

The curriculum of a commentarial institution

rNam grol gling monastery, or more specifically its commentarial school, is typical of the non-dGe lugs institutions of higher learning. rNam grol gling monastery is the exiled version of dPal yul (pa-yül) monastery, which is one of the six great monastic centers of the rNying ma school founded in 1665 by Rig 'dzin kun bzang shes rab (rig-dzing kun-zang shay-rab). rNam grol gling monastery, which has over a thousand monks, is also relocated in Bylakuppe, a couple of miles from Se rwa. Its commentarial school, which was started at the beginning of the 1970s, is part of the monastery but is distinct from it. There are over three hundred students in the school, which is by now the largest institution of its type in the exiled community in India. It is quite representative of the style of education adopted by the three non-dGe lugs Tibetan Buddhist traditions.

In examining the curriculum of the rNam grol gling commentarial school, it is important to remember that the institution we are examining is different from a dGe lugs monastery such as Se rwa. Whereas in the latter scholastic studies are central elements of the monastic routine, in the rNying ma and other traditions studies are carried on in special institutions that are linked with the monastery but remain separate, often physically set apart. In rNam grol gling, the commentarial school (*bshad grwa*) lies next to the monastery but has its own administration, kitchen, and temple, though ultimately it is part of the dPal yul monastery as well. The curriculum of this institution is centered around the study of *thirteen great texts* (*gzhung chen bcu gsum*). It can also be divided into three parts: a preliminary, a central part (the study of the thirteen texts themselves), and esoteric tantra studies.

1) The preliminary part, which lasts one year, focuses on two texts: Padma dbang rgyal's (pe-ma-wang-gyel, fourteenth century) *Treatise Ascertaining the Three Types of Vow*[12] and Śāntideva's *Introduction to the Bodhisattva's Deeds.*[13]

These texts, which are not counted among the thirteen great texts, are studied with the help of literal glosses and combined with a few auxiliary texts teaching grammar and history. During this period students are introduced to basic Buddhist ideas, Mahāyāna practices, as well as the three sets of vow (pratimokṣa, bodhisattva and tantra) to which Tibetan practitioners usually commit themselves. At this early stage central tantric concepts already are introduced. For example, the difference between sūtras and tantras, a topic formally discussed by dGe lugs scholars only after they have completed their exoteric studies, here is taken as a preliminary of the whole curriculum.

2) The second part is centered on the study of the *thirteen great texts*. It can be divided into two phases: a) The lower exoteric course, which last for three years,[14] begins to expose the students to the different aspects of the classical exoteric tradition as they are found in the most important Indian Buddhist treatises. Students I have interviewed often describe Madhyamaka philosophy as the main topic of these three years. This subject is examined through the following three of the thirteen texts:

- Nāgārjuna's *Treatise of the Middle Way*
- Aryadeva's *Four Hundred Stanzas*[15]
- Candrakīrti's *Introduction to the Middle Way*

To these three texts several other texts are added. A particularity of this curriculum is its emphasis on Śantarakṣita's *Ornament of the Middle Way*,[16] which is studied together with its commentary by Mi pham rgya mtsho (mi-pam-gya-tso, 1846–1912). Like in the first phases of the curriculum, these texts are studied with their commentaries, either literal glosses, often composed by gZhan phan, or more substantial explanations, often by Mi pham. The other aspect emphasized during these three years is the study of the Abhidharma, through an investigation of the following two of the thirteen texts:

- Asaṅga's *Abhidharma-samuccaya*[17] (*Compendium of Abhidharma*)
- Vasubandhu's *Abhidharma-koṣa* (*Treasury of Abhidharma*)

Together with these other texts such as Mi Pham's *Entrance Gate for the Wise*, an introduction to the methodology of scholastic studies that rather closely follows Sa skya Paṇḍita's (1182–1251 C.E., henceforth Sa paṇ) text on the same subject. The fourth year is also occupied by the study of Buddhist logic and epistemology on the basis of the main text of the Tibetan tradition on this subject:

- Dharmakīrti's *Pramāṇavārttika* (*Commentary on Valid Cognition*)

This text is studied together with Mi pham's word commentary. Throughout this part of the curriculum, a variety of other auxiliary topics (grammar,

composition, poetics, history) are also examined. One of the particularities of the rNam grol-gling's approach, is the limited role played by the study of logic and epistemology. This is quite different from the dGe lugs tradition, which prides itself on its mastery of Dharmakīrti's thought. It also contrasts with the Sa skya emphasis on the use of Sa paṇ's *Treasure* as a primer of Buddhist logico-epistemological studies.[18] By the end of the first four years, students have a sound command of Buddhist philosophy as well as a good overview of the general structure of the Buddhist tradition.

b) This knowledge is developed by the higher exoteric course, which lasts for two full years, provides students with an understanding of the Mahāyāna tradition, its view of the path and result. This course focuses on the five treatises attributed to Maitreya:

- *Mahāyānottaratantra*[19] (*The Superior Continuum*)
- *Abhisamayālaṃkara (Ornament of Realization)*
- *Mahāyāna-sūtrālaṃkara*[20] (*Ornament of the Mahāyāna Sūtras)*
- *Madhyānta-vibhanga*[21] (*Differentiation of the Middle and the Extremes)*
- *Dharma-dharmatā-vibhanga*[22] (*Differentiation of Phenomena and [Ultimate] Nature*)

The course is completed by a study of monastic discipline on the basis of the study of the following two texts, which are the last of the thirteen texts.

- *Pratimokṣa-sūtra* (the only teaching of the Buddha on the list of thirteen)
- Gunaprabha's *Vinaya-sūtra*

In this way, students complete the exoteric part of their studies. They have a sound understanding of a variety of points of view in Buddhist philosophy and a good grasp of numerous aspects of the Buddhist path. They are ready to move to final part of the curriculum.

3) The third part is the esoteric curriculum, the study of tantras. In the seventh and eighth years, general presentations of the tantric path are examined. The study focuses on the *Guhya garbha* tanlra, which plays basically the same role in the rNying ma tradition as the *Guhya samaja* in the dGe lugs tradition. The main texts are:

- Yon tan rgya mtsho's (yon ten gya tso) commentary on 'Jigs med gling pa's (jik-may-ling-pa, 1729–1789) *Treasury of Qualities* (*yon tan mdzod*)[23]
- Mi pham's commentary on the *Guhya-garbha* tantra[24]
- rDo grub chen's (do-grub-chen) commentary on the *Guhya-garbha* tantra[25]

This study is completed by an introduction during the ninth year to the view of the Great Perfection, the main standpoint of the rNying ma tradition. The study

is theoretical and introductory and focuses on kLong chen rab 'byams pa's (long-chen-rab-jam-ba, 1308–1363) two trilogies:

- the *Trilogy of Self-Liberation (rang grol skor gsum)*[26]
- the *Trilogy of Resting* (*ngal gso skor gsum*), particularly the *Resting [in] the Mind as Such (sems nyid rang grol)*[27]

Together with these works, other tantric texts, particularly Mi pham's commentary on the *Eight Words of Practice* (*sgrub pa bka' brgyad*) and 'Jigs med gling pa's work on the stage of development, are examined. In this way, students are given a solid grasp of the world of tantras, which is, as we will see, one of the goals of this education.

Comparing curriculums: the organization of knowledge

If we compare the curriculums of Se rwa and rNam grol gling, we can see similarities and differences. There is no point here in listing all the relevant features of our comparison. Rather, let me make a few remarks, starting with the similarities. One of the most important features of Tibetan scholastic traditions is the way they organize knowledge on the basis of rool-texts and their commentaries. As we know, this is not a Tibetan invention but derives from the methodology used by both Hinduism and late Indian Buddhism. In traditional India, topics of learning are discussed on the basis of a root text explicated by further commentaries, including a teacher's oral explanation. Even considerations of secular topics follow this model. For example, aesthetics is discussed in relation to the *Natya śāstra*, a basic text that provides the reference point for the whole field. Similarly, in Tibet the study of grammar, for instance, proceeds by commenting on basic texts, in this case the *gsum cu pa* and the *rtags'jug pa*, two grammatical treatises that are said to have been composed by Thonmi Sam bhuta (seventh century) upon his return from India. Even the study of medicine is organized around the study of basic texts, the four medical tantras (*rgyud bzhi*), which are first memorized and then commented upon. Hence, commentary is central not just to religious traditions, but to the way in which knowledge is organized in these cultures.

We could even go a bit further and draw a partial contrast between modern ways of organizing knowledge by disciplines and traditional Indian or Tibetan reliance on commentary. Modern cultures mostly rely on an anonymous and abstract organization of knowledge through disciplines structured around "groups of objects, methods, their corpus of propositions considered to be true, the interplay of rules and definitions, of techniques and tools."[28] This is quite different from the Indian and Tibetan commentarial mode of organization which is based on the principle of explication of a pre-given meaning found in basic texts, which are called root texts (*rtsa ba, mūla*). These texts are most often versified, that is, written in *kārika* (*tshig le'ur byed pa*) or mnemonic verses. In the

Hindu traditions, these texts are called sūtras, the aphoristic summaries of a tradition's scriptural basis, following the methodology developed in Patañjali's grammatical tradition. For example, the meaning of the Upaniṣads is summarized by the *Brahmasūtra*, which is in turn further explained by commentaries. Such texts are not written to be picked up and read by anybody, but are intended to serve as the basis of further oral and written commentary. They would be read in relation to a *bhāṣya* or a *vṛtti* (*'grel ba*), a commentary often written by the author of the root text. Those in turn could be supplemented by a *vyākhyā* or *ṭīkā* (*'grel bshad*),[29] a more detailed gloss used to supplement the first commentary.[30]

Tibetan curriculums are similarly structured. The root-texts that are memorized and studied in the exoteric part of the curriculum are all, with one or two exceptions, Tibetan translations of Indian treatises (*bstan bcos, śāstra*). All of the five or thirteen texts listed above, with the exception of the *Pratimokṣa-sūtra*, fit in this category.[31] This extended use of commentary is fairly unique in the Buddhist world. Certainly, other Buddhist traditions use commentaries but the Tibetan reliance on commentary is stronger than in most other Buddhist traditions, which tend to rely more on the study of the direct teachings of the Buddha and less on later commentaries. For example, both Chinese and Theravāda Buddhisms tend to emphasize the study of the direct teachings of the Buddha as they are contained in their versions of the canon.[32] Monks in these traditions study the words of the Buddha more often and their commentaries directly explicate those. This is obviously not to say that these traditions do not rely on commentaries. For example, Theravāda Buddhism relies on commentaries such as Buddhaghosa's *Path of Purification* and Chinese schools tend to emphasize texts such as the *Awakening of the Faith*.[33] Nevertheless, monks and scholars do tend to devote significant efforts to the study of the teachings attributed to the Buddha as a normal part of the curriculum. Theravādins tend to read the main sūttas as contained in the *Majjūna Nikāya* or the *Dīgha Nikāya*, whereas Chinese monks often focus their study on a central sūtra such as the *Varjarcchedikā*, the *Lotus* or the *Avataṃsaka*.[34]

The Tibetan curriculum is structured quite differently. Although Tibetans do read and study the Buddhist sūtras, the exoteric teachings that purport to be Buddha's words, they tend to put less (this is a matter of degree) emphasize on the words of the founder and more on the systematic study of their content. All the five or thirteen texts used in the exoteric studies, with the exception of the *Pratimokṣa-sūtra*, are Indian treatises (*bstan bcos, śāstra*). They are the root-texts that are memorized and explained by further commentaries. These treatises do not purport to be the direct words of the founder but to clarify aspects of his message. They offer systematic presentations of the founder's teachings in order to facilitate the comprehension and practice of followers. Although these texts are not part of the *bka' gyur*, the collection of the Buddha's teachings available in Tibetan,[35] they are nevertheless canonical, since they are included in the *bstan gyur*, the translated treatises. The thirteenth century polymath Bu ston (bu-dön) brings out the authoritative and commentarial nature of such treatises, defining

them as "works that explain the meaning of the Buddha's word, are in accordance with the path for the attainment of emancipation, and are composed by someone with a nondistracted mind."[36]

We may wonder about such a choice of curricular material, which seems to be unique in the history of Buddhism. This is not the place for an elaborate exploration of the scriptural background of Tibetan Buddhism which would be required to answer such a question in any detail. Suffice it to say that historically the form that Buddhism has taken in Tibet partly derives from the Indian models that existed at the time (eighth to twelfth centuries) when Buddhism was adopted by Tibetans. The emphasis on treatise can also be seen as a way to deal with the tremendous complexity of the canonical material. In general the Buddhist canon is enormous. The *bka' gyur* contains more than a hundred volumes of the teachings that purport to be Buddha's direct words. Moreover, these teachings are not only numerous, but they often explicitly contradict each other. Confronted with this mass of teachings, Tibetans have tended to be selective and systematic. They have preferred the systematic treatment of the material found in the canonical treatises to the more inspirational but less organized material found in the *bka' gyur*.

This organization of the curriculum reflects the unabashedly classical orientation of Tibetan scholastic traditions, their regard for the lost antiquity of high Indian Buddhist culture. The great Indian treatises, which form the basis of the curriculum, are considered to be classical by all the schools of Tibetan Buddhism. Their scholastic educations look on these texts from a past period (fourth to eighth century C.E.), a period often described as the "golden age of Indian civilization," as their models in relation to which their contemporary achievements are measured. For Tibetan scholars, such texts are classical in the full sense of the word, which is explained by Gadamer in this way:

> The "classical" is something raised above the vicissitudes of changing times and changing tastes. It is immediately accessible, not through that shock of recognition, as it were, that sometimes characterizes a work of art for its contemporaries and in which the beholder experiences a fulfilled apprehension of meaning that surpasses all conscious expectations. Rather when we call something classical, there is a consciousness of something enduring, of significance, that cannot be lost and that is independent of all the circumstances of time—a timeless present that is contemporaneous with every other present.[37]

The great Indian treatises have this timeless and normative status. They are the obligatory reference points for later reflections. They are the "great texts" revered by Tibetan scholiasts. They provide the basis and model for the education of Tibetan scholars, who take them as setting the standards against which contemporary achievements are measured.

Comparing curriculums: commentary vs. debate

On the side of differences, a striking feature is the number of texts and the time devoted to the study of each of them in rNying ma and dGe lugs curricular models. Whereas in the dGe lugs curriculum of Se rwa, only five texts are studied during a period of fifteen to twenty years, rNam grol gling monks study at least thirteen texts in half that time. The number of texts is much greater when we include the tantric ones, which are not counted among the thirteen texts, and additional the texts covering auxiliary topics. We may wonder about the reason for this difference. Does it reflect a difference in the content of the education?

It is true that there are differences in the number of topics covered by the two curriculums. The auxiliary topics of grammar, poetry, history, etc., are not covered in the Se rwa curriculum and neither are the tantras, which are studied privately in the tantric colleges. For the most part, however, the content of the two curricular models is similar. Both curriculums cover the same five main topics, albeit quite differently. If we group the different texts into areas of study, we can then discern five main areas: Madhyamaka philosophy, logic and epistemology, the study of the path, monastic discipline and tantra. Let us leave the last topic aside, since it is not officially part of the Se rwa curriculum and is supposed to be studied privately, and examine the ways the two curriculums cover the first four exoteric topics.

For each topic the Se rwa curriculum tends to focus on a single text, which is then supplemented by further commentaries and textbooks. The only exception to this practice is found in the study of the path which is done through two texts: the *Ornament of Realization* attributed to Maitreya and Vasubandhu's *Treasury of Abhidharma* (which I would also count as a study of the path). Even here, however, the textual overlap is only partial, since the former covers the Mahāyāna path whereas the latter covers the Basic Buddhist path. Thus, each topic is really examined through a single text. By contrast, the rNam grol gling curriculum covers each main area by examining several of the relevant texts. For example, when the Mahāyāna path is covered all five treatises attributed to Maitreya are examined. Similarly, when the Abhidharma is studied, both Vasubandhu's and Asaġa's texts are examined. Thus, the number of texts studied for each area varies, although the four main areas are similar.

Thus, it is clear that the main difference between rNying ma and dGe lugs models is not one of content but of educational style or pedagogy. What we have here are two quite distinct models of scholastic studies. The dialectical style of the dGe lugs tradition exemplified by the Se rwa curriculum focuses on a few texts and emphasizes the practice of dialectical debates as one of (and possibly the) central method of education. Whereas in traditional Indian Buddhism debate seems to have been an occasional skill used mostly in public, the dGe lugs tradition emphasizes its pedagogical use as a way to master texts and develop a spirit of inquiry. This pedagogical role for debate has led the dGe lugs tradition to focus on dialectical questions rather than on the more textual and

commentarial aspects of Indian Buddhism. As a consequence, this tradition has tended to limit the textual basis of its studies.[38] It has also sometimes neglected, especially in the three monastic universities, the practice of higher literary skills.

The rNying ma tradition, as exemplified by the rNam grol gling curriculum, on the other hand, is more textual. It emphasizes commentary over debate, and offers a more rounded education which combines literary as well as dialectical aspects. Contrary to dGe lugs institutions, which rely overwhelmingly on the practice of debate, non-dGe lugs scholastic institutions are more moderate in their use of debate as a scholastic pedagogy. Debate is a limited though important part of their curriculum and does not constitute the central methodology, as in the dGe lugs institutions. In that, the non-dGe lugs institutions may be closer to the Indian tradition where debate seems to have taken place mostly for public performance or in actual confrontations with other schools.

These two educational traditions are associated with two institutional forms: the debating institution (*rtsod grwa*) of the dGe lugs tradition, as in Se rwa, and the commentarial institution (*bshad grwa*), as in rNam grol gling. These two types of institution and the traditions associated with them have a long history, which we cannot examine at this point in any detail. Briefly, however, the model of commentarial institutions in Tibet can be traced back to Sa-paṇ, who transformed the Sa skya tradition into one of the main Tibetan scholarly schools in the thirteenth century. Sa paṇ stressed the role of study in monastic training and proposed a model of intellectual inquiry which was in many respects close to classical Indian ideas. Such a model is based on the harmonious combination of three practices: exposition (*'chad*), composition (*rtsom*) and debate (*rtsod*), as explained by Sa paṇ's own *Entrance to the Gate for the Wise (mkhas pa la 'jug pa'i sgo)*.[39] In this text, Sa paṇ greatly emphasized traditional Indian commentarial categories as well as their literary background. He stressed the importance of grammar and semantics as basic scholarly skills and the relevance of Indian poetics to commentarial practice.

The debating tradition grew out of the scholarly activities of the famous translator rNgog to tsā ba (ngok-lo-tsa-wa, 1059–1109). Despite his belonging to the bKa' gdams pa (ga-dam-ba) tradition, which in its origins looked askance at the study of philosophy, rNgog was deeply interested in scholarly studies, which he promoted in Tibet. Under his influence, Tibetan Buddhism in general and the bKa' gdams pa tradition in particular became more philosophically oriented. Under his impulse, the monastery of gSang phu ne'u thog (sang-pu-ne-wu-tok), founded in 1073 by his uncle rNgog legs pa'i shes rab (Ngok-lek-bay-shay-rab, one of Atīśa's direct disciples) started to develop as an active intellectual center. Its importance further increased with the work of Phya pa chos kyi seng ge (cha-ba-chö-gyi-seng-gay, 1182–1251), who brought about important developments due to his acute and original intellect.[40] Phya pa is credited with settling the form of debate practiced by Tibetans. It is under his influence that gSang pu became the center of a tradition that was going to differ from the more classical Indian model later imitated by Sa-paṇ.

Gradually, the education offered by the gSang pu tradition[41] spread throughout the Tibetan world. Later scholastic centers such as sNar thang (nar-thang), Zha lu (sha-lu), and bDe ba chen (de-wa-chen) adopted a curriculum similar to that of gSang pu. It is in these centers that Tsong kha pa and his main disciples received their basic scholarly training. Consequently, the dGe lugs school adopted the gSang pu tradition with its philosophical views, curriculum, and methods of study. From the fifteenth to the seventeenth century, a close link existed between the three dGe lugs monastic universities around Lhasa and gSang pu.[42] After this period, gSang pu lost its importance as a center of study and was supplanted by the three dGe lugs monastic universities, which became the dominant scholastic establishments in central Tibet.

We may begin to understand better the curricular organization of the two models of Tibetan scholastic education. We realize their important similarities and their more subtle variations, as well as the complex histories that lie behind them. But our effort of comprehension cannot stop here, for we need to understand the content of the curriculum. To do so I could describe the content of each text, but it would be hard to avoid the tedium of a scholastic laundry list. Hence, rather than survey the content of the whole curriculum, let me focus on a single aspect, the study of the path, in order to clarify some of the central topics, goals and concerns of Tibetan monastic education.

The place of the study of the path

If we look at the two types of curriculum and the number of texts studied and years spent on them, we can see that by far the greatest amount of effort is devoted to the area of studies which I have termed the *study of the path*. In the dGe lugs curriculum, this topic is examined through at least two texts: the *Ornament* and the *Abhidharma*. Even Candrakīrti's *Introduction* is largely concerned with the path as well. The importance of the topic is clear also in the number of years spent on each of these texts, particularly on the former, which is studied for four or five years at Se rwa through an elaborate textual examination always combined with lengthy debates. It is studied with Tsong kha pa's *Golden Garland*,[43] and rGyal tshab's (gyel-tsap, 1364–1432) *Ornament of the Essence of Commentaries*[44] as well as with the textbooks of the college. In this topic, the textbooks are important because they allow the students to cover topics that are not explicitly covered by the *Ornament*. Students, who have already examined the Abhidharma topics in their study of the *Ornament*, examine them again when they study Vasubandhu's commentary on the Abhidharma for two to four more years. Thus, altogether dGe lugs students may spend close to ten years examining the path.

In the rNying ma curriculum of rNam grol gling, the time devoted to the study of the path explained in the exoteric literature is shorter since the overall exoteric curriculum does not take more than six or seven years. Nevertheless, the topic is covered in considerable detail. True to its textual methodology, the

rNying ma tradition exposes the students to this topic through the study of many texts: at least three of the five treatises attributed to Maitreya are clearly devoted to the study of the path and so are the two Abhidharma commentaries as well as Śāntideva's *Introduction to the Bodhisattva's Deeds*, which is used as an introductory text.

One may wonder why this topic of the path is covered so extensively in both types of curriculum? To those who are experts in a Buddhist tradition, the answer to such a question is self-evident. The path (*lam, mārga*) is the central notion of the tradition. As expressed by Buswell and Gimello, the path "incorporates, underlies, or presupposes everything else in Buddhism, from the simplest act of charity to the most refined meditative experience and the most rigorous philosophical argument. The study of mārga directs attention . . . to a general pattern of discipline encompassing both the whole life of the individual and the corporate life of the whole Buddhist community."[45] Scholars of Buddhism know that the study of a particular formulation of the path plays a central role in a Buddhist tradition. It is the structure around which a Buddhist tradition organizes its practices, its main doctrinal teachings, its central narratives, etc.

For those who have little expertise in a Buddhist tradition, this focus on the path may appear alien, requiring the substitution of the well known terms of religious studies with arcane Buddhological jargon. We should first notice, however, that the Buddhist literature dealing with the path is extremely frequent throughout the Buddhist world. Many other classical Indian treatises, such as those attributed to Asaṅga himself, fit in this class. In Tibet, there is a whole literature expounding this topic: the numerous commentaries on the *Prajñāpāramitā* literature, the studies of Stages and Paths (*sa lam gyi rnam bzhag*) of the sūtra and the tantra, the texts devoted to the structure of the path in the traditions of the Great Seal and of the Great Perfection. Outside of India and Tibet, such texts are also widespread. In Theravāda, Buddhaghosa's *Path of Purification* is only the most famous example of an extensive literature. Similarly, such texts have also played an important part in Far Eastern Buddhism, as evinced by the importance of Chih-i's (538–597) *Mo-ho-chih-kuan*.[46]

The impression of unfamiliarity further dissipates when we begin to realize that this classical Buddhist standpoint can be recast in terms of an emphasis on practice. Too often religious traditions are defined in terms of creed, an approach that is far from being as universal as it may seem. Although such a view has some applicability to Buddhism, I would argue that it is basically inappropriate to a tradition that emphasizes practice as its central focus. This does not mean that doctrines, symbols or narratives are irrelevant to Buddhism, as Buddhist scholars know, but that they need to be understood in terms of how they relate to actual practices.

When we realize that the idea of the path is the way in which Buddhism expresses its pragmatic and soteriological emphasis,[47] we begin to understand why students spend so many years in studying the structure and result of the path. We have yet to understand, however, the way in which such studies relate

to actual practices. It may be tempting to assume that texts dealing with the path directly relate to actual practices, in particular to the meditative practices that are normatively speaking central to the tradition. I would like to argue that this assumption is warranted, however, only to a very limited extent. I would further argue that although practice is central to Buddhist traditions and the various treatments of the path are meant to address this pragmatic emphasis, it is a mistake to assume that teachings on the path necessarily reflect an experiential standpoint.

Recently, R. Sharf has argued in the same sense. His view is that some modern Buddhist scholars and contemporary Buddhist practitioners mistakenly regard the literature describing the structure and results of the path in experiential terms. Sharf says:

> In fact, it is difficult to imagine how somebody could mistake this kind of religious literature for "expressions" or "reports" of personal experiences; they are first and foremost scholastic compendiums, compiled by monks of formidable learning who were attempting to systematize and schematize the confused and often conflicting descriptions of practices and stages found scattered throughout the canon.[48]

For Sharf, it is a categorical mistake to assume that the literature dealing with the path is either a reflection of Buddhist practice or a direct preparation for it. My point here is not to discuss Sharf's arguments, which address the presentations of many traditions and thus may have to be nuanced. Nevertheless, I believe that his view is quite appropriate in the case of the Tibetan presentations of the exoteric path that are central to scholastic education, especially the presentations derived from the works attributed to Maitreya and Asaṅga. Let me elaborate this point, before making a few broader concluding remarks.

The study of the path and Buddhist practice

Among the canonical works concerning the exoteric path, the one that stands out is the *Ornament*, which is attributed by Tibetan scholars to the celestial Bodhisattva Maitreya. This work is studied for often up to six years in dGe lugs institutions and, although less time is devoted to it in non-dGe lugs institutions, it remains a central reference of the Tibetan presentations of the path. Thus, it constitutes an ideal testing ground to see whether Sharf's view applies to the Tibetan presentations of the path.

The *Ornament* is a commentary on the *Prajñā-pāramitā-sūtra*, the main canonical source of the teaching of emptiness. The primary concern of this commentary is not, however, to explain this teaching but to delineate the stages of the path from the Mahāyāna standpoint, a subject taught only implicitly in the sūtra, according to the Tibetan tradition. Tibetan scholars describe the topic of the *Ornament* as the stages of realization that are the hidden meaning of the

sūtra (*smdo'i sbas don mngon rtogs kyi rim pa*). The *Ornament* summarizes its own content in this way:

> The perfection of wisdom (*prajñā-pāramitā*) has been proclaimed by way of eight themes: 1) the wisdom knowing all modes, 2) the wisdom knowing the paths, 3) the wisdom knowing all [phenomena], 4) the full practice of all aspects, 5) the culminating stages of practice, 6) the gradual practice, 7) the instantaneous practice, 8) the dharma-body.[49]

Each of the eight chapters of the *Ornament* addresses one of the eight themes (*dngos po, padārtha*). There is no point here in analyzing these eight themes. Suffice it to say that the *Ornament* describes the structure of the Mahāyāna path through the four practices (*sbyor ba bzhi, catvāraḥ prayogāḥ*) or realizations (*mngon rtogs, abhisamaya*). These four realizations (chapters 4–7) take as their objects the first three themes (chapters 1–3), the three wisdoms of the Buddha. The result of this fourfold practice is the dharma-body of the Buddha and his special attainments (chapter 8).

I suggested earlier that the importance of the path in Buddhist tradition reflects a pragmatic orientation on the part of the tradition, which understands what would be called in English *religion* more as a matter of practice than of creed. It is tempting to infer from this that since it teaches the Mahāyāna path, the *Ornament* must bear a direct relation with actual Mahāyāna meditative practices. It is also tempting to infer the since this text explains the Mahāyāna path, those who study it intensively, as Tibetan scholars do, must be interested in this text for practical reasons. These assumptions are, however, unjustified. Although practice is central to Buddhist traditions and the *Ornament* relates to this pragmatic emphasis, it is incorrect to assume that teachings on the path necessarily reflect an experiential standpoint. In order to understand a text we cannot look just at its content and deduce from this its application; rather, we must consider the ways in which such a text is used by the textual communities in which it is embedded.

In discussing the ways this text is used by Tibetan traditions, we may want to keep in mind the fact that the *Ornament* is used differently by the two main Tibetan scholastic traditions characterized above. In the non-dGe lugs commentarial institutions, the *Ornament* is studied for its content, the eight themes, which are explained through seventy topics (*don, artha*). In this way, students learn about the four realizations, the bodies (*sku, kaya*) of the Buddha as well as a number of elements of the Mahāyāna path such as the mind of enlightenment (*byang chub kyi sems, bodhicitta*). Non-dGe lugs traditions do not focus exclusively on the *Ornament*, but complete this study of the path by examining the other texts attributed to Maitreya as well as Asaṅga's and Vasubandhu's Abhidharma texts.

dGe lugs monastic universities proceed differently. They take the *Ornament* as the central text for the study of the path, treating it as a kind of Buddhist

encyclopedia, and read it in the light of commentaries by Tsong-kha-pa, rGyal tshab and the authors of textbooks. Sometimes a single word of the *Ornament* is taken by commentaries more as a pretext for elaborate digression than as an object of serious textual explanation. Several dGe lugs colleges, such as the Byas (jay) College of Se rwa, recognize this situation and consider these topics as special (*zur bkol*).[50] They are studied in relation to the *Ornament* but apart. In this way, most of the topics relevant to the Buddhist path, whether from a Mahāyāna perspective or from a more general basic Buddhist standpoint, are covered in the course of studying this one text. The summarizing commentaries of the textbooks, particularly the *General Meaning* (*spyi don*), are here helpful in offering synthesized presentations of all the relevant topics. In this way, students are introduced to a variety of topics and perspectives, despite the limitations of their textual basis.

When we look at the ways in which both these Tibetan scholastic traditions use the *Ornament*, we see very little practical relevance, despite some claims by members of the traditions themselves. Among the topics either directly covered by the *Ornament* or studied in relation to it, few appear to have any direct relation to practice. Let us first look at the central themes of the text. Among the eight topics the first three, the three wisdoms of the Buddha, are not meant to be practiced directly. They are taken as the object of the path, which consists of the four practices. Similarly, the last theme, the dharma-body of the Buddha is not directly relevant to practice but is the goal of practice. The central form of practice presented by the *Ornament* is the four practices or realizations, particularly the practice of all the aspects (*rnam rdzogs sbyor ba*), the topic of the fourth chapter. In fact, this is the central topic of the text and may have been an actual practice in which all the different aspects of the three wisdoms are summarized in a single meditation called the *meditation summarizing the three wisdoms (mkhyen gsum bsdus sgom*). This is not the place to explain this highly technical topic which would take us into the stratosphere of Tibetan scholasticism. What is relevant for our purpose is that this practice seems to be realistic. It does not involve any extraordinary feat, as in the case of the miraculous qualities of the Buddhas and Celestial Bodhisattvas, but can be implemented by anybody interested in doing so.

But, and this is the important point, no teacher I have ever met, seems to have practiced this meditation or even to have been clear on how to do so. Non-dGe lugs curriculums do study this practice but few seem to have a convincing understanding of this topic, even at the textual level. As far as the students I interviewed, they seem to have gotten very little out of the study of this part of the text. Among dGe lugs scholars, there is probably a better understanding of the topic at the theoretical level. Nevertheless, nobody I encountered seems to be clear about the ways to practice this text. Thus, it is clear that in the Tibetan scholastic traditions, the central themes of this text are not practiced. What about the other auxiliary topics, those that are briefly presented by the text or those that are studied through other texts?

It may seem that some of the less central topics studied have direct practical applications. For example, the mind of enlightenment (*byang club kyi sems. bodhicitta*) is studied in the first chapter. Similarly, the single-pointed concentration that leads to the attainment of tranquility (*zhi gnas, śamatha*) is studied in great detail. Concentration is studied with considerable care for several months, and in certain colleges such as 'Bras spung sGo mang (dre-bung-go-mang) and Se rwa Byas is considered a special topic (*zur bkol*). Thus, topics such as the mind of enlightenment or concentration, which are of practical importance, are studied at great length. Moreover, teachers do point out the practical importance of studying them. Are these not signs that these texts are used for practice?

Although it is tempting to assume here an experiential relevance, the reality appears to be quite different, for the study of these topics remains mostly confined to the theoretical domain. Students do not devote much time to the study of the aspects of these topics that are of direct relevance to actual meditation. For example, in the study of concentration, the nine stages leading to tranquility, which are of practical use, are not given much attention. Similarly, the two methods for generating the mind of enlightenment,[51] which are central to the Gradual Path (*lam rim*) literature, are barely mentioned. The real focus is theoretical. The mind of enlightenment is not studied here as an attitude to be developed but in function of its role in the overall Mahāyāna path. Similarly, the study of concentration focuses on the attainments of the four absorptions (*bsam gtan, dhyāna*) and the four formless concentrations (*gzugs med, arūpa*).[52] These are standard forms of Buddhist practice which have been and are practiced in certain Buddhist traditions. Nevertheless, they are rarely practiced in the Tibetan tradition. When monks become really serious about practice and start the type of extended retreat that would enable them to aim for such attainments, they do not practice the four absorptions or the four formless concentrations, but focus on the tantric path. There, the attainment of tranquility is discussed for which special methods are introduced,[53] but the attainments of absorptions and formless concentrations play little role.

Thus, the conclusion seems hard to escape. Despite claims to the contrary sometimes made by members of the tradition, the study of the *Ornament* and other texts similarly presenting the exoteric path seems to have little relation to experience within the context of Tibetan scholastic traditions. We may then wonder why Tibetan scholars spend so much time studying these topics? Are they taken in by their own claims? Or do they just keep studying texts that had an experiential relevance in an earlier time, which is now lost? I have obviously little to say about the historical back-ground ground of this last question, for the way in which these texts were used by Indian Buddhists is outside the purview of my inquiry. It is important to remember, however, that understanding the practices of a tradition as left-overs of a meaningful past that has lost its relevance is inadequate. People engage in the lengthy study of such texts not out of habit but because they find it meaningful. But what is the meaning that Tibetan scholars find in a text such as the *Ornament*?

Worldview and the study of the ornament

I would like to suggest that the answer is not to be found in experience but in what could be described as the formation of a worldview. The discussion of the exoteric path is central to Tibetan traditions not because it provides practical guidance but because it provides for the construction of the kind of meaningful universe that Buddhist practice requires. This explanation of the role of the *Ornament* follows a venerable tradition in the Western academical study of religions, which proposes that religion is a way to understand the universe and cope with the limits that it imposes on humans. Some of the formulations of this view, such as those of Tylor and Frazer, are by now thoroughly discredited. They were clearly wrong in presenting religion as a kind of primitive science aiming at the explanation of natural phenomena. Even more recent and relevant formulations of this view are still problematic in that they reflect too closely the theological background out of which they come. Weber, for example, holds that the religions of salvation are based on a theodicy of suffering and happiness.[54] Similarly, Geertz argues that religion is a model both of and for human existence. It enables humans to bear existential problems such as suffering or evil by placing these experiences within a meaningful framework.[55] Although not without merit, these views in which the Protestant influence is transparent fit Buddhism only imperfectly, for the latter is based on the rather optimistic idea that humans can overcome suffering. Hence, the idea of acceptance, which is central to Weber, Geertz and many modern scholars of religious studies, is problematic in a Buddhist context. Nevertheless, it is certainly not wrong to argue that a religion such as Buddhism seeks to enable its followers to cope with suffering and the other limits of human existence.

In a Buddhist perspective, this coping with suffering, which is the goal of the tradition, has several dimensions. First and foremost, Buddhist traditions hold that only sustained religious practices can effectively help humans to diminish and eventually overcome suffering. Such liberative, or to use J. Z. Smith's words,[56] utopian practices involve a whole range of soteriological practices. Most of them have little to do with meditative experience and pertain to what is usually called merit making. In this category, we can include not only most traditional lay practices such as giving to the monastic order but also most of the monastic practices as well. In particular, the scholastic studies examined here are understood by participants as a form of merit making. This type of Buddhist practice forms the core of much actual Buddhist practice. It should not be considered at odds with so-called higher meditative practices, but, on the contrary, as continuous with them. Merit making is part of the liberative or utopian dimension of the tradition. In some ways, the value that monks find in monastic studies derive from their being meritorious. Studying a text such as the *Ornament* is intrinsically valuable. It is in and of itself virtuous.

Nevertheless, this intrinsic virtuous quality of Tibetan scholastic studies is not their main value. Normatively speaking, the main value of studies, one of the

two types of activity in which Buddhist monks are supposed to engage, is in their leading to the development of virtues such as inner calm, attention and inquisitiveness that will in turn enable the practitioner to be successful in the higher meditative practices. For there is no doubt that, from a normative standpoint, meditative practices are considered by most Buddhist traditions as the ultimate means of freedom. In considering these higher practices, however, it is a mistake to overemphasize the experiential dimension. Although Buddhist meditations involve experience, this is not their only or even most relevant feature. From a Buddhist perspective, meditations are first and foremost ethical practices that seek to develop central virtues such as detachment and compassion.

Moreover, ethical practices do not exist independently of larger cultural frameworks in relation to which they make sense. In particular, Buddhist practices require a cosmological framework in which the virtues that are being developed and the practices used for this purpose make sense. Buddhist practices and virtues are supposed to have immediate effects on the basis of which Buddhist teachers often argue for the cogency of their traditions. But the immediate benefits that one derives from certain practices are not enough to support the kind of intensive commitment necessary to their implementation. Humans do not live just by quick fixes but need to decide on long term goals and means to reach them. They need a narrative through which they know what to do and become persuaded that they are on the right track. They also need to be able to bring a sense of closure to such a narrative, to find a standpoint toward which their efforts are aimed and from which they make sense. Such a standpoint can be found only in a certain type of universe. To construct such a universe of meaning is one of the main goals of the study of the *Ornament* and other related texts in Tibetan scholastic traditions.

This universe of meaning is the one familiar to students of Buddhism. It is explained by the basic teachings of Buddhism such as the four noble truths and dependent origination, supplemented by the Mahāyāna sūtras. The four noble truths provide the kind of existential analysis of human existence, as impermanent, suffering and no-self, that can provide the basis for spiritual practices. These basic teachings also indicate the possibility of liberation and the path that can lead to such a goal, thus forming a universe in which the practices recommended by Buddhist traditions become meaningful. The universe of meaning constructed by the *Ornament* and other related texts is not, however, just that of basic Buddhism, for it is a Mahāyāna universe, where the goal of practice is less self-liberation than universal salvation. This is the universe of the Mahāyāna sūtras in which bodhisattvas strive to become Buddha through the practice of the perfections (*phar phyin, pāramitā*).

To develop such a view of the world, students go through a number of topics which pertain either to basic Buddhism or to the Mahāyāna tradition. They study the basic teachings mentioned above, including the four truths, the analysis of mental factors, the difference between concentration and insight, the form and formless absorptions, etc. In the dGe lugs debating institutions, these topics,

(with which students of other Buddhist traditions, particularly Theravāda), are familiar, are studied in the textbooks and the commentaries, which take the *Ornament* as a pretext for exploring the Buddhist universe. This is in accordance with this tradition's emphasis on debate and the concordant tendency to keep the textual basis of studies limited. In the non-dGe lugs commentarial institutions, such a study is done in relation to other texts such as those of the Abhidharma.

Students also study the central topic of the Mahāyāna tradition, the structure of the Mahāyāna path, the central topic of the *Ornament*. Related topics such as the development of the mind of enlightenment, the nature and role of the perfections (*phar phyin, pāramitā*), or the conflicting views on Buddha-nature (*bde gshes snying po, tathāgata-garbha*) are examined at great length. Students also study the divisions and sub-divisions of the paths, the stages of the Mahāyāna path, the qualities obtained at each of these stages, and the final results to which they lead.[57] In this way, the students form a coherent picture of the path and the universe in which this path makes sense.

In the non-dGe lugs commentarial institutions, particularly at the rNam grol gling monastery, this Mahāyāna picture of the world is in turn supplemented by the study of the tantric path. Right from the beginning, students are introduced to the tantric dimensions of Buddhist practice. The universe of meaning constructed here is not just Mahāyāna, but tantric as well. Students are made aware that the path and the goal are esoteric and that the exoteric texts figure as introductions to the real path, which is tantric. These texts are meant to be supplemented by the tantric description of the path. Thus the last three years out of a total of nine years of study are devoted to a detailed study of the tantric tradition.

But here again, it would be a mistake to take this tantric curriculum as reflecting a practical orientation. Students do not receive practical instructions on how to meditate. Such instructions are provided only after students have begun their actual meditative career. Moreover, such instructions are mostly given only in private or during optional periods of retreat. Hence, the tantric instructions contained in the curriculum of commentarial institutions are not intended to provide practical guidance but theoretical models that support the construction of a universe in which tantric practice is meaningful. The particularity of the rNying ma curriculum is not that it is more practical, but that the universe that it constructs is tantric rather than based purely on the exoteric aspects of the tradition. Thus, the difference with dGe lugs curriculum is real but does not concern the actual practices of either tradition.

The practices of the Tibetan traditions are quite similar, although not identical. What differs is the rhetoric used to present such practices and the ideological contexts thus created. In the dGe lugs model, the universe and the path to which students are introduced theoretically are exoteric and the actual tantric practices they later engage in are understood to fit into such a framework. Even while describing actual tantric practices dGe lugs texts tend to emphasize the primacy of the exoteric narrative of spiritual progress thereby bringing the legitimacy of the classical exoteric model to their esoteric practices. In the rNying ma

model, the universe to which students are introduced doctrinally is mostly tantric and the exoteric teachings are taken as supporting this construction. The actual practices that students later engage in fit easily into the narratives of spiritual progress derived from these tantric models. Members of the tradition sometimes find it harder, however, to justify their practices in reference to the classical Indian model.

Scholasticism and the construction of meaning

It is in this ideological and theoretical perspective that the *Ornament*'s discussion of apparently practical topics must be understood within a Tibetan context. Topics such as the mind of enlightenment or the attainments pertaining to the form and formless realms are important not because they directly prepare for meditations but because they support the elaboration of a universe in which Buddhist practice makes sense. The *Ornament* and similar texts are, for Tibetans, not reports on or direct preparations for Buddhist practice, but rhetorical representations of the meaningful universe envisaged by the tradition. They provide students with a meaningful outlook, which may support further practices, but which has no direct relevance to them.

This construction of a universe of meaning is not something unique to Tibetan scholastic traditions. Most religious traditions, however, do not take the doctrinal and intellectualist approach adopted by Tibetan scholasticism. Rather, they emphasize the role of myths and rituals in achieving such a goal. In the Tibetan scholastic traditions such dimensions obviously exist but they seem less important than in non-scholastic traditions. Myths are obviously present but they seem to play a less important role in the construction of meaning than the doctrinally based narratives. The central narratives are not derived from the concrete teachings of the founder or the biographies of the central figures, but emerge from abstract doctrines. This, I suggest, is a particularity of scholasticism as a religious phenomenon.

To be successful, this construction of a meaningful universe and the path that transcends it must become self-evident, so that students feel confident in their practices. The steps along the path must appear to them as concrete stages in relation to which Buddhist practice makes sense. This concreteness should, however, be understood in relation to the process of reification through which it is constructed. The map provided by the *Ornament* literature does not refer to some self-evident mental states existing independently of textuality. The stages described by the *Ornament* are not set in stone. Rather, they are constructed symbolic objects that acquire the solidity necessary to inspire and sustain people in their actions. They are best characterized, following Burke's term, as symbolic actions, that is, as representational forces that attempt to influence their audience.[58] Thus, far from being a kind of guide to Buddhist practice or a description of spiritual experiences, the *Ornament* provides the Tibetan tradition with the framework that makes a narrative of spiritual progress possible and

introduces an element of closure without which the commitment required by Buddhist practices cannot be sustained.

Notes

1 S. Maillous, "Interpretation," *Critical Terms for Literary Studies*, eds. F. Lentricchia and T. McLaughlin (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1995) 121–134, 121.
2 B. Stock defines textual community as "a group that arises somewhere in the interstices between the imposition of the written word and the articulation of a certain type of social organization. It is an interpretive community but it is also a social entity." *Listening for the Text* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990) 150.
3 Although there are minute differences between the scholastic institutions of the three contemporary non-dGe lugs traditions, they all have the same commentarial model of education and are quite similar. This similarity is not accidental, for they all derive from the scholarly revival initiated by gZhan phan (Zhanphan) toward the end of the nineteenth century in the context of the non-sectarian (*ris med*) movement initiated by 'Jam mgon kong sprul (jam-gön-kong-trul, 1813–1899) and 'Jam dbyangs mkhyen tse'i dbang po (jam-yang-kyen-tse-wang-po, 1820–1892).
4 The slight variations in the curriculum between the two scholastic colleges (Byas and sMad) of Se rwa are irrelevant here.
5 Sources on the curriculum of the three monastic universities are limited. Geshe Sopa, *Lectures on Tibetan Religious Culture* (Dharamsala: Tibetan Library, 1983) 41–3 and A. Wallace, *The Life and Teaching of Geshe Rabten* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1980) 47–9 are the main sources on the state of monastic education in Tibet. My presentation is also, and perhaps mostly, based on my stays in these monasteries where I observed monastic education as it has been reconstituted in exile in India. It is also based on countless conversations with older monks who constantly referred to the state of monastic life in traditional Tibet.
6 *Abhisamayālaṃkāra-nāma-prajñāpāramitopadeśa-śāstra-karikā, shes rab pha rol tu phyin pa'i man ngag gi bstan bcos mgnon par rtogs pa'i rgyan zhes bya ba tshig le'ur byas pa*, P: 5184.
7 *Madhyamakāvatāra-nāma, dbu ma la'jug pa zhes bya ba*, P:5262.
8 *Pramāṇa-vārttika-kārikā, tshad ma rnam 'grel gyi tshig le'ur byas pa*, P: 5709.
9 *Prajñā-nāma-mūla-madhyamaka-kārikā, dbu ma rtsa ba'i tshig le'ur byas pa shes rab ces bya ba*, P: 5224.
10 *Abhidharma-koṣa-kārikā, chos mngon pa'i mdzod*, P:5590.
11 *Vinaya-sūtra, 'dul ba'i mdo tsa ba*, P: 5619.
12 *sDoms gsum rnam par nges pa'i bstand bcos.*
13 Śāntideva, B *bodhicaryāvatāra, byang chub sems dpa'i spyad pa la 'jug pa*. P: 5272. S. Batchelor, trans., *A Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life* (Dharamsala: Library of Tibetan Works, 1979).
14 The prospectus for the rNam grol-gling institute includes the introduction in the lower sutra course, which thus lasts for four years. It divides the curriculum in three parts: lower sūtra course, higher sūtra course, and tantra course. My own division in three plus one parts is made for the sake of comparison with Se rwa's curriculum.
15 *Cattuḥśataka-śāstra, bstan bcos bzhi brgya pa*, P: 5346.
16 *Madhyamakālaṃkāra-pañjikā, dbu ma'i rgyan gyi bka' 'grel*, P: 5286.
17 *Abhidharma-samuccaya, chos mngon pa kun las bstus pa*, P: 5550.
18 Sa-gya Paṇḍita, *Treasure on the Science of Valid Cognition (tshad ma rigs gter)*, Complete Works of the Great Masters of the Sa sKya Sect, vol. 5 (Tokyo: Toyo Bunko, 1968) 155.1.1–167.1.6. The curriculum of the Sa skya College in Rajpur (India) includes this text in its list of basic curricular texts.

19 *Mahāyānottaratantra-śāstra, theg pa chen po'i rgyd bla ma bstan bcos*, P:5525.
20 *Mahāyāna-sūtrālaṃkara-kārikā, theg pa chen po'i mdo sde'i rgyan gyi tshig le'ur byas pa*. P:5521.
21 *Madhyānta-vibhaṅga, dbus dang mtha' rnam par 'yed pa*, P:5522.
22 *Dharma-dharmatā-vibhaṅga, chos dang chos nyid rnam par 'byed pa*. P:5523.
23 *Yon tan rin po che'i mdzod kyi'grel pa zab don snang byed nyi ma'i'od zer*, (Gangtok: 1969).
24 *gSang 'grel phyogs bcu'i mun sel gyi spyi don 'od gsal snying po*.
25 *dPal gsang ba'i snying po'i rgyud kyi spyi don nyung ngu'i ngag gis rnam par byed par rin chen mdzod kyi lde mig*, Collected Works, vol. 3 (Gangtok: Dodrup Chen Rinpoche, 1974).
26 *Rang grol skor gsum*, Gangtok: Sonam Kazi, Ngagyur Nyingmay Sungrab, vol 4.
27 *Ngal gso skor gsum*, Gangtok: Dodrup Chen Rinpoche, 1973.
28 M. Foucault, "The Discourse on Language," *The Archeology of Knowledge* (New York: Harper, 1969, 1972) 215–237, 222.
29 A brief examination of the Tibetan catalogues of the *bstang gyur* suggests that the Tibetan translation of these terms is far from systematic. The word *bshad pa* is used to translate a *vyākhyā* as well as a *bhāṣya*. See P: 5555 and 5565.
30 L. Gómez., "Buddhist Literature: Exegesis and Hermeneutics," *Encyclopedia of Religion*, vol. 2 (New York: Mcmillan, 1987) 529–540, 532.
31 One exception is the inclusion in the Sa skya curriculum of Sa paṇ's *Treasure*. That this exception is also a treatise is quite revealing of the role of treatise in the Tibetan scholastic tradition.
32 On the different canons, see W. E. Clark, "Some Problems in the Criticism of the Sources of Early Buddhism," *Harvard Theological Review* 18.2 (1930): 121–147. For the Pāli canon, see K. R. Norman, *Pāli Literature* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz., 1983) and S. Collins, "On the Very Idea of a Pāli Canon," *Journal of the Pali Text Society* 15 (1990): 89–126. On the Chinese canon, see K. S. Chen, *Buddhism in China* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964) 365–386.
33 Bhikkhu Ñyāṇamoli, *The Path of Purification of Bhadantācariya Buddhaghosa* (Boston: Shambala, 1956, 1976) and Y. Hakeda, *The Awakening of Faith* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1967).
34 Bhikkhu Ñyāṇamoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi, *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha* (Boston: Wisdom, 1960, 1995); M. Walshe, *Thus I Have Heard* (London: Wisdom, 1987); E. Conze, trans., *Vajracchedikā Prajñāpāramitā* (Rome: Ismeo, 1957); L. Hurwitz, *Scripture of the Lotus Blossom of the Fine Dharma* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976); T. Cleary, *The Flower Ornament Scripture* (Boulder: Shambala, 1984).
35 P. Harrison, "A Brief History of the Tibetan bKa' 'gyur," *Tibetan Literature*, ed. J. Cabezon (Ithcaca: Snow Lion, 1995), 39–56.
36 Bu ston, *lung gyi snye ma*, 5, quoted in J. Cabezón, *Buddhism and Language* (Albany: Suny University Press, 1994) 45.
37 H. G. Gadamer, *Truth and Method* (New York: Crossroad, 1992) 288. Such a description is adequate only from a phenomenological point of view. It describes the attitude of the participants in the tradition toward certain texts, but does not provide an adequate analysis of the cultural reality of these texts. Despite what Gadamer seems to suggest, there is no necessity in classical texts, for tradition is contingent. Textual choices come and go and what is considered classical by one age is forgotten by the next. Tibetan education provides examples of such changes. In the study of logic and epistemology, Dharmakīrti's *Pramāṇa-viniścaya* was first chosen but later replaced by his *Pramāṇa-vārttika* under Sa paṇ's impulsion. Since then, Tibetan scholars consider this latter text as *the* classical expression of Buddhist logico-epistemological tradition.

38 The dGe lugs tradition is often praised by outsiders for its dialectical depth but criticized for its limitations in knowing the fundamental Indian treatises. Thus dGe lugs scholars are sometimes characterized as having a "limited [textual] vision" (*mthong bya chung ba*).

39 See D. Jackson, *The Entrance Gate for the Wise* (Wien: Arbeitkreis für Tibetische und Buddhistische Studien, 1987).

40 L. van der Kuijp describes Phya pa as a non-sectarian thinker mostly associated with the bKa' gdams pa. "Phya-pa Chos-kyi-seng-ge's Impact on Tibetan Epistemological Theory," *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 5 (1978): 355–369, 357.

41 It should be clear that this label is a simplification, for both rNgog's and Sapaṇ's traditions coexisted at gSang pu. The monastery was divided between bKa' gdams colleges, which followed Cha-ba's tradition, and Sa skya colleges, which probably followed Sa-paṇ's model of education. Rong ston (rong-dön, 1367–1449), for example, who was one of the foremost proponents of Sa-paṇ's tradition, taught extensively at gSang pu. See D. Jackson, "introduction," in *Rong-ston on the Prajñāpāramitā Philosophy of the Abhisamayālaṃkara* (Kyoto: Nagata Bunshōdō, 1988). Nevertheless, the name is convenient in view of the later connection between the dGe lugs school and the bKa' gdams elements at gSang pu.

42 See S. Onoda, *Monastic Debate in Tibet* (Wien: Arbeitkreis für Tibetische und Buddhistische Studien, 1992) 13–36.

43 Tsong kha pa, *Extensive Explanation of the Treatise of the Ornament Together with its Commentaries, a Golden Garland of Good Sayings. (bstan bcos mngon rtogs rgyan 'grel pa dang bcas pa'i rgya cher bshad pa legs bshad gser gyi phreng ba*, Bylakuppe, India: Sera Monastery. Block). The use of this book in the dGe lugs tradition has given rise to a lot of controversies. Despite its being authored by the founder of the tradition, many dGe lugs scholars prefer to rely on rGyal Ishab's work or on textbooks. This choice is often questioned by thinkers outside of the dGe lugs tradition who snear at the refusal of many dGe lugs scholars to use the book of their founder. dGe lugs scholars, however, justify their choice by the fact the *Golden Garland* was written when Tsong-kha-pa was thirty one and had not yet reached his maturity. Hence, it cannot be taken as reflecting a mature dGe lugs standpoint, they argue. There is some truth to this. Tsong-kha-pa's large work appears to be a compendium of commonly accepted opinions concerning the *Ornament* and it reflects a variety of views, which are not all compatible with Tsong-kha-pa's later views. Nevertheless, it contains also some insightful explanations and several dGe lugs teachers hold that it is impossible in this tradition to claim to know the *Ornament* and its literature without mastering the *Golden Garland*.

44 rGyal Ishab, *Ornament of the Essence of Commentaries (rnam bshad snying po rgyan*; Varanasi: Pleasure of Elegant Sayings Press, 1980).

45 R. Buswell and R. Gimello, introduction, *Paths to Liberation* (Honolulu: Hawaii University Press, 1992) 6.

46 See J. McRae, "Encounter Dialogue and the Transformation of the Spriritual Path in Chinese Ch'an," *Paths to Liberation*, eds. R. Buswell and R. Gimello (Honolulu: Hawai University Press, 1992) 339–370.

47 The soteriology normatively emphasized by Buddhist traditions is best described, following J. Z. Smith's useful distinction, as utopian rather than locative. "The Wobbling Pivot," *Map is not a Territory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993) 88–103.

48 R. Sharf, "Buddhist Modernism and the Rhetoric of Meditative Experience," *Numen* 42 (1995): 228–283, 238.

49 *shes pha rol phyin pa ni / dngos po brgyad kyis yang dag bshad / rnam kum mkyen nyid lam shes nyid / de nas tham cod shes pa nyid / rnam kun mngon rdzogs rtogs pa*

dang / rtse mor phyin dang mthar gyis pa / skad cig gcig mngon rdzogs byang chub / chos kyi sku dnag de rnams brgyad// prajñāpāramitā-ṣṭābhiḥ padārthaiḥ samudīritā/ sarvākārajñatā (1) mārgajñatā (2) sarvajñatā (3) tataḥ// sarvākārābhisaṃbodho (4) mūrdhaprāpto (5) 'nunpūrvikaḥ (6) / ekakṣaṇābhi-sambodho (7) dharmakāyas (8) ca te 'ṣṭadhā // E. Obermiller and Th. Stcherbatsky, *Abhisamayālaṃkāra-nāma-prajñāpāra-mitopadeśa-śāstra, The Work of Bodhisattva Maitreya* (Leningrad: Bibliotheca Buddhica, 1929; reedited Osnabrück: Biblio, 1970), stanzas 1:3–4, P: 5184, *Ka*, 1.a–15.b, 1. This work has been translated by E. Conze, *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* (Roma: ISMEO, 1954). For a still unmatched study of the content of this work, see E. Obermiller, *Acta Orientalia* 11 (1933): 1–100. Translation, which is mine, is based on this last work.

50 In some colleges, some of the central topics such as tranquility or the distinction between interpretable and definitive teachings are considered separate topics. They have special texts devoted to them and in Se rwa Byas are studied apart, usually the year before finishing the *Ornament*. The other colleges do not have a special time devoted to them, but they do have special texts.

51 The tradition of the Gradual Path often speaks of two methods to develop the mind of enlightenment: the first, the seven causes and effect, is based on considering the debt we owe all sentient beings for their having been our mothers and having had countless other kindness. The second, exchanging self and others, focuses on the equality of self and others and proposes an exchange of one's attitudes toward oneself and others. See Geshe Rabten. *The Essential Nectar* (London: Wisdom, 1984) 305–66.

52 The dGe lugs views on this topic have been well presented by L. Zahler, *Meditative States* (London: Wisdom, 1983), and Geshe Gedün Lodrö and J. Hopkins, *Walking Through Walls* (Ithaca: Snow Lion, 1992). For a detailed Theravāda view on the topic, see Ñānamoli, *The Path of Purification*, 1.84–478. For an easier view, see A. Solé-Leris, *Tranquility and Insight* (Boston: Shambala, 1986) 56–73.

53 See D. Cozort, *Highest Yoga Tantra* (Ithaca: Snow Lion, 1986) 55–6.

54 M. Weber, "The Social Psychology," *From Max Weber*, eds. H. Gerth and W. Mills (New York, 1958) 271–275.

55 C. Geertz, "Religion as a Cultural System," *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973) 87–125, 100–5.

56 Smith, "The Wobbling Pivot."

57 For a brief overview of the literature, see: J. Levinson, "The Metaphors of Liberation," eds. Cabezon and Jackson, *Tibetan Literature*, 261–274.

58 K. Burke, *A Rhetoric of Motives* (New York: Prentice Hall, 1950) 22–3.

75

PROBLEMS OF LANGUAGE IN BUDDHIST TANTRA

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Source: *History of Religions* 15, 3 (1975): 231–50.

Near the beginning of his vast *Summa Theologica*, Thomas Aquinas quotes from a patristic writing: "The sacred Scriptures surpass all sciences by their manner of speaking. In one and the same word they record an event and proclaim a mystery." Concurring, Thomas goes on to distinguish between literal and spiritual interpretation by stating: "God is the author of sacred Scripture, and he is able not only to adapt words (which even a man can do) but also to adapt things to signify something. While words mean something in every science, it is characteristic of this science that the things which the words indicate themselves signify something" (I, 1, 10).[1] Here we observe a medieval Christian theologian grappling with the problem of language within his particular religious tradition, and we observe that the discussion of this problem does not originate with Thomas but is passed down to him. The issue would seem to be inherent in sacred materials. Of course, this issue is potentially significant for any discipline or art making use of words, but here—in the thought of Thomas—we notice that the problem is felt keenly, that the problem is taken to be a particularly tough one for religion. And there appears to be warrant for such a feeling. In this "manner of speaking," a single word is said to be capable of multiple meanings, one of the meanings remaining a "mystery." It is acknowledged that words signify but that also things can be used to signify; thus, one might be confronted in religious discourse with a depth of meanings—a word signifying something, itself signifying something else. Obviously, the problem of language in this context lies not with the language as such—which seems capable of many possibilities with no problem at all—but with the interpretation of this highly versatile manner of discourse. The problem is stated by the question, How are we to take what is being said?

The reader may be assured that we are concerned with this question and its answer within Buddhist Tantra. But we have chosen to open our considerations with this look at developed Christian thought—interesting in itself—to call attention to the presence of our problem of language elsewhere, perhaps

wherever religious discourse is found. We call attention also to the features of the problem as they emerge elsewhere; as will be seen, the features isolated by Thomas Aquinas appear in similar form within the discussion of Buddhist tantric language. But the larger context and similarities of treatment serve to show a peculiarity of the Buddhist discussion. We suggest that while the problem of language is important for religious discourse in general, Buddhist discourse seems to be peculiarly self-conscious of the problem. We find, for example, in Pāli Buddhism, that famous king Milinda and the monk Nāgasena debating how one should take the words "chariot" and "Nāgasena" in order to grasp the central doctrine on *ātman*. Nearly every parable in the influential *Saddharma-puṇḍarīka* of Mahāyāna Buddhism takes up the issue of how the Lord could justifiably utter statements about three vehicles when in reality there is only one. And then there is the trenchant critique of language by Nāgārjuna and his follower Candrakīrti in their Mādhyamika philosophical formulation of the Mahāyāna.

We shall see that tantric Buddhism continues this concern for the problem of language, but we could expect this from the outset. On the one hand, Mkhas-grub-rje tells us in his *Fundamentals of the Buddhist Tantras* that all Tantras have a philosophical base which is Mādhyamika-Prāsaṅgika and thus—so we might conclude—contain that school's critique of language in some form.[2] On the other hand, given the sweep of the Buddhist tradition on this issue, we would find it surprising if the "third turning of the Wheel of the Doctrine" lost rather than gained sophistication in the uses and interpretation of religious discourse—unless, of course, we assume a "degenerate" break with tradition. The assumption can be made and is no doubt behind La Vallée Poussin's vision of "disgusting practices both obscene and criminal, including incest" within the Tantras.[3] Yet George has recently translated, apparently without much disgust, a substantial portion of the Caṇḍa-mahāroṣana Tantra upon which the great French scholar himself had once worked. The difference, George observes, lies in a favorable change in the "intellectual climate" over the past thirty years. We probably should not take this to mean that modern intellectuals have become less sensitive to their materials or more cordial toward criminal practices and incest. Rather, we should understand that a different answer has been found to the question, How are we to take what is being said?

It must be obvious that our problem is a fundamental one for the study of the literature of Buddhist Tantra. Scholarship, therefore, has not failed to address it although the scope of attention has varied. Tucci mentions in a note a distinction between "literal" and "allegorical" meaning in the Guhyasamāja Tantra;[4] Govinda treats briefly of a type of Tantric parlance called "twilight language" which is said to bear a double meaning, the "ordinary" and the "mystic."[5] Much more fully, Eliade and Bharati discuss this "twilight" feature—preferring the translation "intentional language"—and develop arguments on such issues as its double purpose, namely, its secrecy and also its power to induce certain states of consciousness.[6] The Sanskrit for this particular facet of the problem,

saṃdhā-bhāṣā ("twilight/intentional language"), has itself opened up the more philological discussions of Edgerton, Śāstrī, and others.' Wayman has addressed this and other facets of the problem with much attention paid to primary sources that are therefore made available to us, and so it is upon this research especially that much of what follows relies.[8] Let us note that we oppose the opinion of some that interpretations such as these are "not possible"—which must mean "not valuable"—since materials and translations in the field are scarce.[9] To the contrary, we suggest that this opinion is itself an interpretation of Tantra, however indirect, and that the question is really one of better or worse interpretation rather than none at all. The special problem of scarce materials is real, however, as is the problem of developing sufficient skill to deal with them. But all of this points to the necessity of accepting the limits upon one's ability to solve major problems in this field and to the necessity in some cases of accepting a noticeable dependence upon the work of others. We accept these limits and expect to shed only some light on the problems of language in Buddhist Tantra. And we gladly acknowledge our indebtedness to other scholars; but we do intend to work toward an independent view and intend that the sources speak for themselves.

The problem in general

An important structure from which to begin examination of many issues in Buddhist Tantrism is that of the "four divisions" of its literature classified according to their expression of the "two methods" employed by Tantra, "outer action" (*bāhya-kriyā*) and "inner yoga" (*adhyātma-yoga*). Mkhas-grub-rje, disciple of Tsoṅkha-pa and thus commenting out of the Gelugpa school, tells us: "The Kriyā Tantra was expressed for subduing the candidates (*vineya*) who delight in 'outer action,' while the Caryā Tantra was expressed for subduing the candidates who delight in practicing 'outer action' and 'inner yoga' in equal measure. The Yoga Tantra was expressed for subduing the candidates who delight in the 'yoga of inner *samādhi*,' while the Anuttara Yoga Tantra is the incomparable Tantra for subduing the candidates who delight in 'inner yoga'."[10] The confusing similarity of method for the last two divisions—which are supposed to be distinguished by method—is clarified by Wayman's statement of this scheme after Tsoṅ-khapa. According to the *Sṅags-rim-chen-mo*, the Yoga Tantra is expressed for those "who delight predominantly in inner *samādhi* over external ritual," while the Anuttara Yoga Tantra is for those "who delight in inner *samādhi* completely."[11] We observe that the *Sṅags-rim-chen-mo* also correlates this scheme with activities of "deities." The distinction between deities' "holding hands" and being "united"—corresponding to the Yoga Tantra and Anuttara Yoga Tantra divisions, respectively—is a clue to the very real difference between these two divisions and supports the fact that the fourth division does "completely" what is begun in the third.[12]

It bears mentioning that what motivates the fourfold distinction of literature is

the difference in candidates for whom different methods need to be expressed. Thus, the Tantras continue the general Buddhist concern for appropriate teaching found in Pāli Buddhism and later emphasized in the Mahāyāna. Yet the attempt here to be precise about which texts function in which way is characteristic of Buddhist Tantrism and, we suggest, an advance of the tradition. Of course, the fourfold scheme is somewhat arbitrary in practice, since the texts classified appear prior to their classification and frustrate its precision. But the attempt remains. We see its persistence in a note to the Lessing and Wayman translation of Mkhas-grub-rje's *Fundamentals*. There, we learn that the literature associated with the *Pradīpodyotana* offers the further complexity of a fivefold typology of the Anuttara Yoga candidate alone. This refinement is made with regard to faculty: "The 'sandlewood-like' is in the family of fools (*blun poḥi rigs can*); the 'blue-lotus-like' has inferior faculty (*indriya*) (*dbaṅ po dman pa*); the 'white-lotus-like' has intermediate faculty (*dbaṅ po bar pa*); the "red-lotus-like' has keen faculty (*dhaṅ po rno ba*); the 'jewel-like' has the most excellent of faculties (*dbaṅ po rab lcyi rab po*).[13]

As was seen above, a difference of candidate again controls a difference of expression of Tantra; thus, these five types receive instruction by way of "six alternatives" (*ṣaṭkoṭi; mthaḥ drug*) for expressing the method of "inner *samādhi* completely." We list the six instructions here in paris with titles provided by Tsoṅ-kha-pa's *Jñāna-vajrasamuccaya:*[14]

Alternatives of word (*śabda*):
  Nontwilight language (*na-saṃdhi-bhāṣā, dgoṅs pa can ma yin pa*)
  Twilight language (*saṃdhi-bhāṣā, dgoṅs pa can*).
Alternatives of meaning (*artha*):
  Hinted meaning (*neyārtha, draṅ don*).
  Evident meaning (*nīthārtha, ṅes don*).
Alternatives of both word and meaning:
  Coined terminology (*na-yathāruta, sgra ji bżin pa ma yin*)
  Standard Terminology (*yathāruta, sgra ji bźin pa*).[15]

The first "alternative" of each pair is expressed to the first four types of candidates treated as a group, while the second of each pair is reserved for the fifth candidate, the "jewel-like" person who has superior faculty. Mkhas-grub-rje notes with regard to the Guhyasamāja Tantra—a chief text of the Anuttara Yoga division—that —that the "jewel-like" candidate arrives at the limit of the first division of vogic practice called the Steps of Generation (*utpattikrama*) but singularly goes on to the second and final division of yoga called the Steps of Completion (*niṣpanna-krama*).[16]

These many distinctions have taken us deep inside the Buddhist Tantras and face to face with the problem of language there, especially within the Anuttara Yoga division; even its special terms for that problem have appeared, namely, "word" and "meaning." We will want to turn our attention to that particular

division of the literature, therefore, and will begin by assessing what guidelines for interpreting tantric texts have emerged thus far. First, we think it is obvious why this literature—including the controversial *Caṇḍamahāroṣana Tantra* mentioned earlier—has caused so much difficulty for interpretation. The Anuttara Yoga uses language in a complex way and is thereby necessarily difficult to understand. Nevertheless, we do know that this division of Tantra instructs its candidates in "inner yoga completely." As a clue to interpretation, this description opens up an internal landscape for the yogin's practice and for our recognition of where events of that practice are taking place. Failure to see this much room for interpretation, in fact, may be behind the strong reactions of La Vallée Poussin and others disturbed by what they read in Anuttara Yoga Tantras. We need to be cautious, however, and not take all that occurs in this particular literature as internal process, since features of the Steps of Generation seem to overlap with more clearly external rituals of other divisions. Then, too, we know that the highest candidate in Anuttara Yoga Tantra receives instruction by way of "twilight language," "evident meaning," and "standard terminology." Since he alone proceeds to the Steps of Completion, we can expect to find these uses of language operating wherever features of these Steps emerge, that is, wherever the discussion turns to such practices as manipulating winds and entering light stages. For the same reason, we can expect to find "nontwilight language," "hinted meaning," and "coined terminology" wherever features of the Steps of Generation appear, that is, such practices as generating the *maṇḍala* and offerings.

Some special problems

For these expectations to bear fruit for the actual task of interpretation, we need to know what the "six alternatives" actually are; and it would be appropriate for us at this point to examine each of them closely. We must choose, however, to limit the scope of close examination to the first pair of alternatives; yet it is here that we have the most materials and here too that we can demonstrate most clearly the character of problems of language in Buddhist Tantra. To establish further the context for this special analysis, we should note that the alternatives are paired according to "word," "meaning," and "both word and meaning." While the meaning of these distinctions themselves is problematic, there are immediate implications for translation here. Wayman is able to reject Edgerton's translation "esoteric meaning" for *saṃdhā-bhāṣā*, since "his rendition attributes a given meaning, which is the province of either *neya* and *nīta*."[17] We add that "meaning" is the province also of the third pair based upon word and meaning. But such considerations, while accurate for translation, should not lead us to conclude that the first pair based upon "word" lacks meaning, since that in turn would force the conclusion that the second pair based upon "meaning" lacks words—which is not only linguistically absurd but untrue. Rather, the second pair itself suggests another route to understanding. Wayman has shown that the

alternatives of "meaning" offer two different meanings for a single word.[18] It follows that the alternatives of "word" offer different words—or systems of words, *bhāṣā*—for a single meaning. Although our reasoning is based upon what may be an artificial symmetry in Tsoṅ-kha-pa's titles, we think it will hold in the following analysis. But we shall see also that the one meaning expressed by both "twilight" and "nontwilight" language remains singular in only a general way since a critical distinction lies within it.

In his article "Climactic Times in Indian Mythology and Religion," Wayman discusses traditional India's perception of "climactic points in the temporal flow when experience of time becomes so intense that time itself seems to stop."[19] Supporting Eliade's description of "sacred time," it is claimed that during such breaks in ordinary time the sage has the best opportunity to break through himself from ordinary to supraordinary states.[20] Thus it is that Gautama Buddha is said in the earliest Scriptures to have conquered Māra at dusk and to have reached *bodhi* at dawn. We can see that ordinary time ceases at these two moments in the precise sense that each "twilight" (*saṃdhā*) signals a "paradoxical place where the worlds of darkness and light intersect."[21] On the strength of this and research elsewhere of a more philological nature, Wayman is able to translate *saṃdhā-bhāṣā* as "twilight language"—a special language created to express the "ambiguity, contradiction, or paradox of the moment between darkness and light" as well as the ambiguity of the states attained at such a time.[22] A telling passage is adduced from the non-Tantric Saddharma-puṇḍarīka: "And having heard this *buddhadharma*, I thought 'Indeed, this is expressed in the manner of twilight; at the tree of enlightenment the Jina reveals the knowledge that is inaccessible to logic, subtle, and immaculate.' "[23]

In close parallel—and incidentally continuing the earlier "Lotus" tradition—Tsoṅ-kha-pa comments in Guhyasamāja literature that the tantric goal is so uncertain that "even the Tathāgatas do not know" it.[24] Nevertheless, the chief candidate of the Anuttara Yoga Tantra is to be instructed in this very goal, a necessity that requires the expression of instruction to reflect uncertainty. The "ambiguous discourse" (*viruddhālāpa*) of "twilight language," then, functions in precisely this way. Wayman is thus further able to reject other scholars' translations of *saṃdhā-bhāṣā* as "secret language" or "intentional language," since what cannot be known cannot be properly secret and what lacks certain meaning cannot be said to intend a certain meaning beyond what the words suggest.[25] It is interesting to note that Govinda—translating "twilight language" yet representative of the position implied by the other translations—argues similarly about "secrecy" when the problem is *mantra*. He states that its secrecy is "not something that is hidden intentionally" but something esoteric only in the sense of being acquired by "insight."[26] But let us recognize again that "twilight language" does express meaning, albeit ambiguous meaning. In support of our earlier analysis based upon titles of the pairs of alternatives, the tantric Candrakīrti states that a "truth of nature is revealed" (*dharmatattvaprakāśanam*).

It can be said that language has ceased to function here in an ordinary way—like climactic time—because the meaning expressed does not clarify but remains ambiguous, like the time of twilight. Yet, unlike any time, the ambiguity of *saṃdhā-bhāṣā* is created, is self-conscious, is intended; and in this sense at least "twilight language" is "intentional language." This must be so since all of the uses of language we are examining are instructions to particular candidates for particular ends. In the case of *saṃdhā-bhāṣā*, however, the "jewel-like" person learns—to use a term from Thomas Aquinas—mystery; he learns what cannot be known. For this to happen, of course, the candidate must appropriate the truth of "twilight language" with a nonrational faculty. This faculty is no doubt that of "insight" (*prajñā*), by which Gautama Buddha himself was able to "see" the truth at his Enlightenment at the break of dawn. Reasoning further, we can conclude that "twilight language," functioning specifically as instruction in nonrational states, is actually encouraging—perhaps training—the candidate to use "insight." This supports Eliade's conclusion that *saṃdhābhāṣā* functions "chiefly to project the yogin into a 'paradoxical situation' indispensable to his training."[27]

In sharp contrast to these characteristics of "twilight language," "nontwilight language" (*na-saṃdhā-bhāṣā*) is defined by Candrakīrti thus: "Whichever one teaches with certainty a truth for the comprehension of sentient beings having dull senses and in a very clear way—that one is not expressed in the manner of *saṃdhi*."[28] We observe that again there is teaching of some "truth" which our logic above suggests we take to be the common "meaning" expressed by different "words" in this pair of instructions. Again, Wayman indicates that yogic states are that common reference but that the states are not ambiguous here—like attainments in time which is not climactic, "nontwilight." Thus, *na-saṃdhā-bhāṣā* can be known like ordinary instruction and can be expressed with rational clarity and certainty. Still, yogic clarity is not necessarily scholarly clarity, and our few materials provide little sense of what actually happens here. We note, however, that the candidate in this case has "dull senses"; this signals the group of candidates who practice only the Steps of Generation in the Anuttara Yoga and suggests where we can find "nontwilight language" even if it remains something of a mystery to us.

Near the beginning of the Saṃvarodaya Tantra, selected chapters of which have been published recently by Tsuda, we find—following Tsuda's translation:[29] "Then, I will explain the meditation upon the process of origination (*utpattikrama*). In accordance with the nature of their various deeds (*karman*), creatures are of four kinds according to their mode of birth: oviparous, viviparous, creatures produced from moisture and beings born apparitionally" (2. 1–2). From the context, announced as Steps of Generation (*utpatti-krama*), we should understand that we are reading "non-twilight language"; and, indeed, there is the ring of ordinary clear instruction to this material which could be found elsewhere in Indian literature. But, from what we have learned of this "alternative" of tantric parlance, we should not take these words to be a Buddhist lecture on

the law of karma and science of embryology. These words, as the text itself says, are a "meditation" (*bhāvanā*) and thereby express yogic states attained by meditating upon the instruction; we might say that the candidate so instructed "knows" the content in trance as the Buddha—before complete enlightenment—says he "conceived (mystic) manifestations (*obhāsa*)" whereby "knowledge arose."[30] We should not, however, read "ambiguity" into such a context, since that would require in addition the "arising of insight." It strikes us as mysterious to find farther on in this same chapter of the Saṃvarodaya:[31] "There are two veins in the middle of the *yoni* (the female organ) and likewise to the left and the right. One should know that semen is on the left and the menstrual fluid on the right. The union of both, (that is,) oneness, is *dharmadhātu* (the sphere of *dharmas*) by its nature. *Karman* is obtained by means of the seed, which is made to move to and fro by winds" (2. 23–24). Yet, however strange such language appears to an interpreter, here it is "non-twilight language" and should be taken as expressive of a certain and clear experience within a particular stage of Buddhist tantric yoga.

Returning now to "twilight language" to find examples with which to sharpen our analysis, we seem at first to have an easy task. The Hevajra Tantra itself—translated by Snellgrove—contains a list said by the "Lord" to be *saṃdhā-bhāṣā*, and it is given for the instruction of "Vajragarbha," the interlocutor.[32] We learn, in part:

> *madhya* (wine) is *madana* (intoxication)
> *māṃsa* (flesh) is *bala* (strength)
> *malayaja* (sandlewood) is *milana* (meeting) . . .
> *catuḥsama* (a potion of four ingredients) is *gūtha* (dung)
> *kasturikā* (musk) is *mūtra* (urine)
> *sihlaka* (frankincense) is *svayaṃbhu* (blood)
> *salija* (rice product) is *mahāmāṃsa* (human flesh). [2. 3. 56–60][33]

While we will present the entire list below, this excerpt can help us to see certain issues involved. At the outset, we observe that what is given here is not *saṃdhā-bhāṣā* proper but a vocabulary for the construction of such a language; this will be clear shortly. Yet, as a vocabulary list, the instruction to Vajragarbha implies an act of translation, a turning of words of one language less well known into words of another language better known. Thus, it seems reasonable at first glance to interpret loosely that "wine" and "flesh," etc., are words within "twilight language" which *mean* "intoxication" and "strength," etc., in language which is not "twilight" and which is known. This interpretation fits the position of scholars who hold that a certain meaning is intended by *saṃdhā-bhāṣā* and that this use of language is a secret code; the list in the Hevajra Tantra, therefore, is a sort of "code-book." But we have concluded above—from strong sources—that "twilight language" *means* ambiguous yogic states and cannot be better known. Logically, an equivalent such as "wine is intoxication" (whichever

side of the copula represents "twilight") is not possible, is meaningless—unless one side of the equation states less well what is meant. The only purpose that a self-conscious inaccuracy could have, then, would be to clarify the fact that "twilight language" refers to yogic states but not to clarify *saṃdhā-bhāṣā* itself which remains unclear by definition.

This rationale seems cogent upon examination of equivalents for the Hevajra list given by the tantric Nāgārjuna in his *Saṃdhibhāṣā-ṭīkā*. Wayman translates these for us and provides the correlations but calls the additional materials "explanations" which, as we have argued, they cannot be in any strict sense. Expanded, our excerpt appears thus:[34]

"wine" is "intoxication	is the ambrosia (*amrta*) of heaven, to be drunk continuously
"flesh" is "strength"	is wind, is food, to be controlled.
"sandlewood" is "meeting"	the coming together of external states, sense organs, and perceptions (based thereon)—which is so to be contemplated; also the consubstantial joy (*sahajānada*).
"a potion of four ingredients" is "dung"	is Vairocana, hence is present through anointment of the body.
"musk" is "urine"	is Akṣobhya, ditto.
"frankincense" is "blood"	is Ratnasambhava, ditto.
"camphor" is "semen"	is Amitābha, hence is present through anointment.
"rice product" is "human flesh"	is Amoghasiddhi, hence is present the same way.

The additions, one can see, tend to suggest that "wine" and "flesh," etc., have to do with yoga. Controlling winds, contracting sense operations, contemplation are clearly yogic practices; and a knowledge of Buddhist Tantras makes just as clear the yogic reference of ambrosia and consubstantial joy within the Steps of Completion of the Anuttara Yoga. The same can be said for the five Buddhas—Vairocana, etc.—which the yogin attempts to draw in as supramundane *svabhāva* for his otherwise empty five personality aggregates. Thus, the position that *saṃdhā-bhāṣā* means yogic states finds support here, but—since that position is even stronger now—we must take Nāgārjuna's interesting gloss as helpful to us but not very helpful to a candidate seeking the tantric goal. He must be instructed effectively with fully ambiguous expressions.

Immediately following the section in the Hevajra Tantra containing the list called *saṃdhā-bhāṣā*, a question is asked about singing and dancing. The Lord answers with his own song (in Apabhraṃśa) using more than a dozen words

from the list, and it is here that we are reading "twilight language" proper. We give an excerpt from Wayman's translation with commentary by Nāropā who tends to agree with Nāgārjuna's commentary on the list:

> Having united the vola and the kakkola, one should eat meat (= the five personality aggregates which are the nature of the five Tathagatas, and which thereby lose self-existence, melting into the self-existence of the mind of enlightenment possessing the five knowledges, mirror-like, etc.); and having united those two, one should drink wine (i.e. ambrosia). ... He (the Lord) takes the fourfold potion (Vairocana), musk (Akṣobhya), frankincense (Ratnasambhava), and camphor (Amitābha) (because he is inseparable from them).[35]

Of course, as this excerpt stands, we are reading *saṃdhā-bhāṣā* interpolated with what is not *saṃdhā-bhāṣā*; but let us be clear that the interpolation is not *na-saṃdhā-bhāṣā*; which is a technical term for the use of language referring to unambiguous yogic states. We can agree with Wayman that Nāropā's "commentary provides an understanding" but only in the limited sense argued above. What matters here for instruction of a capable candidate is the "twilight" expression of the song (and the medium of singing as well?) whose meaning is experienced or "seen."

We come now to an important problem which we have been unable to solve to our satisfaction. If our analysis of the *saṃdhā-bhāṣā* list and song has merit, then what has become of the equivalent in the basic list or the middle term of the expanded list? In the equation "wine" = "intoxication" = "ambrosia ... drunk continuously," how should we take "intoxication"? The question arises because the song makes use of the first term in "twilight language" while the third term appears to serve as commentary. The middle term is left untouched. At first, the solution would seem to be to take "intoxication" as an opaque but concise way of saying "ambrosia ... drunk continuously" so that both middle and third terms function as commentary to establish the fact of a yogic reference; and it would not be un-Indian to comment in such a concise way that subcommentary would need to follow. The same could be said for the relationship of "strength" and "wind, is food ...," of "meeting" and "coming together ..."; there seems to be a natural relationship between them. But this reasoning fails upon consideration of the remainder of our excerpted material. No natural relationship pertains between "dung, urine, etc." and the five Buddhas—at least, these terms do not appear to be correlated any more rationally than are the "twilight" terms "potion, musk etc." with the five Buddhas. Instead, "musk" and "urine" seem equally distant from "Akṣobhya"; they seem equally ambiguous as if both first and middle terms were *saṃdhābhāṣā* words.

In fact, in the *Caṇḍamahāroṣana Tantra*, we find an "eating" and "drinking" of urine, etc., which is parallel to the "taking" of musk, etc., in the "twilight" song. The text reads as George translates:[36]

He should drink urine as he likes
placing his mouth on the Bhaga, and
placing it on the anal lotus, he
should eat feces as he likes.

There should not be even a slight
disgust, otherwise Success [*siddhi*] would
be ruined. This diet is the best,
eaten by all Buddhas. [4. 100]

Other portions of text refer to the taking in of other substances so that all five of our middle terms are used in contexts that seem to be "twilight language." We note that there is more than the parallel to establish these words as *saṃdhā*. In addition, the mention of *siddhi* or "success" in yoga establishes the necessary yogic context. And since the Tantra at this point is most likely explaining what follows upon the "Insight Initiation," this yoga is established within the Steps of Completion which contain that rite.[37] We are not obliged, however, to take the Tantra's mention elsewhere of being "soiled with stools and urine" as *saṃdhā-bhāṣā*, since the context of these words refers only to punishment for violating a certain vow (1. 30). Also, we can observe here a striking feature of *saṃdhā-bhāṣā*, namely, that its actual ambiguity of meaning is carried by words which of themselves seem anything but ambiguous; above, the meaning seems much too clear! But if all of this establishes the problematic likelihood that both sides of the equations in the Hevajra list are "twilight," the Caṇḍamahāroṣana crowns the problem with this statement:[38]

In front of him, looking him in
the face, she should pinch him
on the chest. She should speak
to him in this way: "Eat my
Vairocana!

Drink the water of Akṣobhya!" [6. 50]

This reads like *saṃdhā-bhāṣā*, and the context is stated explicitly to be the Steps of Completion. Yet it is the expansion material that we have analyzed as a kind of commentary which is being used as *saṃdhā* words, and it is now the commentarial literature—according to the translator's notes—which "explains" that we have to do here with faces and urine! Thus, we have seen all three terms of the equation "musk" = "urine" = *Akṣobhya* open to use in "twilight language."

Additional problems arise from examination of the context of the *saṃdhā* list of words in the Hevajra and from a look at related materials provided by Snellgrove in notes and appendix. Since we are examining closely, we pause here in the analysis to give our translation of Hevajra Tantra 2. 3. 53–67 based upon the Sanskrit and Tibetan of Snellgrove's edition and a translation from the Tibetan

of Hevajra-piṇḍārthaṭīkā 15. 59b. 3–7, commentary attributed to Vajragarbha. We have also consulted Kāṇha's commentary *Yogaratnamālā* for which Snellgrove provides the Sanskrit.[39]

* * *

Hevajra Tantra 2. 3. 53–67:

> Vajragarbha said:
>
> What is called "twilight language" (*sandhyābhāṣam*)?[40] May the Lord speak with certainty about that great symbolism (*mahāsamaya*) of the yoginis which is not understood by Śrāvakas, etc. [53]
>
> By the four divisions—even the Tantra of "laughing," "gazing," "embracing," and "coupling"—"twilight language" is not explained.[41] [54]

The Lord said:

> I will explain. You, Vajragarbha, must listen with one-pointedness of mind. This is "twilight language"—the great language, the symbolic convention (*samayasaṃketa; dam tschig brda*)—in full: [55]
>
> "wine" is understood as "intoxication," "flesh" as "strength," "meeting" as "sandlewood"; "phlegm" is "going," "resort" is "corpse," "naked" is "bone ornament";[42] [56]
>
> "wandering" is said to be "coming"; "drum" is understood as "wood"; "emission" is explained as "nonpotential"; "Kāliñjara" is understood as "potential"; [57]
>
> "small drum" is said to be "untouchable"; "lotus vessel" is "skull"; "satisfying" is known as "food"; "jasmine wood" is herbs"; [58]
>
> "the potion of four ingredients" is said to be "dung"; "musk" is held to be "urine"; "frankincense" is known as "blood"; "camphor" is understood to be "semen"; [59]
>
> "rice product" is said to be "human flesh"; "resin" is "union of the two"; "gum myrrh" is explained as "thunderbolt"; "perfume" is understood as "lotus." [60]
>
> "Family" is explained as the "fivefold" divided into five divisions of color. Thus, in "twilight language," the Buddhas are the "five familied ones"—[43] [61]
>
> "Dombī" is explained as belonging to the Vajra family, and "Naṭī" to the Padma family, and also "Caṇḍālī" to the Ratna family; "Dvijā" is understood to be of the Tathāgata one, [62]

as is also "Rajakī" of the Karma family. These *mudrās* are givers of good *siddhi*. Their *śukra* is Diamond.[44] Having made offering, the devotee drinks.[45] [63]

Vajragarbha, O Great Being, all of that which has been told to you by me is to be taken with respect as "twilight language" (*sandhyābhāṣam; gsan baḥi skad*), a great wonder. [64]

He who is initiated in this *Hevajra* and does not speak in "twilight language" destroys the symbolism. In this matter, there is no doubt.[46] [65]

Thus, one will die from calamity, thieves, demons, fever, and despair—even though he be a Buddha—if he does not speak in "twilight language." [66]

If the one speaking has attained to the knowledge of his own symbolism (*svasamaya*) and does not speak this, then the yoginīs born of the four *pīṭhas* will produce their wrath.[47] [67]

Hevajrapiṇḍārthaṭīkā 15. 59b. 3–7:

"Symbol (*brdaḥ*) should be understood as having two divisions. Namely, as stated by the root tantra: if one who has learned the symbols of body and speech (*lus daṅ ṅag*) with the yoga belonging to Heruka does not speak with those symbols of body and speech, then even though he be a Buddha he will certainly be destroyed.

Consequently, subsequent to that (learning), yogins and yoginīs adhering to the yoga of *Hevajra* should keep it in mind to take care of the instruction about the symbols of body and speech.

In the midst of an assembly of male and female messengers (*pho ña; dūta*) of another family and those malicious beings of outside, one should not speak with ordinary convention (*tha sñad; vyavahāra*). If we speak with that great secret (*gsaṅ chen*) which is that symbolism, then pernicious beings and the male and female messengers of the outside will be kept baffled (*rmoṅs par ḥgyur*).

. . . in this chapter, only the symbolism of body is shown; the symbolism of speech will be shown in another chapter.[48]

* * *

From this primary material, we can see all too readily that the problem of "twilight language" in Buddhist Tantra is even more complex than our analysis thus far has indicated. First, we note that the *saṃdhā* list translated by Snellgrove, whom Wayman follows with changes, differs from our own with regard to the first term; this is significant if the first term is to be taken as unknown "twilight"

being translated into the second term but insignificant if first and second terms are both "twilight." We have arrived at our list—which we have written out with verbal forms as it appears in the edited texts—by translating consistently from the initial word order thus: *madanam madyam* (as it stands, "intoxication wine"), "wine is . . . intoxication." Interestingly the Tibetan version transliterates one side of the equation and translates the other; such a practice as this suggests strongly that the transliterated term is a primary term—the one supposedly found in Sanskrit manuscripts as *saṃdhā*—for which a "meaning" is given.[49] While there are exceptions, these transliterated terms along with our first terms tend to be the ones found in the "twilight" song. Thus, there is a tendency to treat the list's first terms as *saṃdhā*. This agrees with our earliest impressions but contradicts our later findings that both first and second terms can be used in *saṃdhābhāṣā*.

These materials also call into question our conclusions on ambiguity and secrecy. We have argued that ambiguous language cannot be known and have agreed with the position that what cannot be known cannot be said to be secret. At first glance, the Hevajra's repeated statement that an initiate faces disaster "if he does not speak in 'twilight language' " appears to support us. This could be a way of saying that failure to use *saṃdhā-bhāṣā* means a loss of *siddhi* to which the ambiguity of special discourse opens up a candidate. And this does provide a certain logic for our reading also that "twilight" discourse belongs to yoginīs who are "givers of good *siddhi*" but who—when their language is not used—reverse roles and "produce their wrath." But the text also says that the "great symbolism" (*mahāsamaya*) "is not understood" (*na chidrita*; literally, "not penetrated") by Śrāvakas, with the double implication that *saṃdhā-bhāṣā* is actually understood by those who speak it and that this language serves as some kind of screen. Indeed, Kāṇha glosses *mahāsamaya* as *guptasaṃketa*, which may be rendered "hidden convention"; and the Tibetan renders *saṃdhā-bhāṣā* as *dgons paḥi skad* ("twilight language") as well as *gsaṅ baḥi skad* ("secret language"). Any doubt on this issue is dispelled by Vajragarbha, who states explicitly that "twilight language" is the "great secret" (*gsaṅ chen*) which keeps outsiders "baffled" (*rmoṅs pa*). That commentary even instructs the initiate to speak with "twilight language" instead of "ordinary convention" (*tha mal paḥi tha sñad*) as if these two forms of discourse were interchangeable. But we have argued that such an interchange is meaningless.

Of course, these additional findings are not at all troublesome for scholars who take the position that *saṃdhā-bhāṣā* is ambiguous yet at the same time expresses a certain meaning which can be concealed. But, as we have seen, this position has its own troubles with the materials analyzed earlier and leaves untouched its logical inconsistency. Let us note further that the issue of secrecy—interpreted from whatever materials—has been complicated greatly by our discovery that the full range of *saṃdhā* equivalence can find its way into *saṃdhā-bhāṣā*. As the issue is frequently discussed, "twilight language" conceals the tantric use of degenerate or controversial elements which are better

kept secret; thus "musk" conceals "urine." But, if this is true, why is it that "urine" sometimes appears openly in a tantric text? Does "urine" conceal the use of "musk"? Does "urine" conceal "Akṣobhya"? Our last question is rhetorical, of course, but we can conceive of an affirmative answer. It could be advantageous or even humanitarian to hide a powerful yogic term or device from persons who might abuse it somehow, and such an interpretation has the merit of accommodating both ambiguity and secrecy since what is powerful need not be accessible to reason. It may be this argument that Govinda has in mind when he describes "twilight language" as a "protection" against the "misuse of yogic methods and psychic forces by the ignorant or uninitiated."[50] But, in the final analysis, we are forced to recognize that nothing is concealed, for whatever reason, even though some texts speak of secrecy.

We have remarked already that we see no clear and satisfying way through these many difficulties; we can, however, suggest possible lines of inquiry for further research. It may be that part of the problem of secrecy needs to be shifted to a new locus, namely, to "inner yoga completely." We judge that errors in Tantra studies can sometimes be attributed to a failure to recognize the internal dimension of Anuttara Yoga Tantra. If the "outsiders" from whom certain things need to be kept secret are really inside the yogin, then a new sort of discussion pertains. We would be able to discuss secrecy with regard to the external environment of a yogin—following materials like those of Tsoṅ-kha-pa as we have done—and then discuss the same issue with regard to that yogin's inner landscape, which would probably be open to conclusions peculiar to it. Vajragarbha's commentary actually provides the clue to this line of reasoning by referring to the two divisions of "symbolism," body and speech. The symbolism of body here is the mutual gesturing between yogins and yoginīs at the place of meeting, the *kṣetra* or *pīṭha*. But Tsuda has been able to show the transfer of the external *pīṭha* to a place within the body in Buddhist Tantrism.[51] If that transfer occurs, it can be said that all events associated with the *pīṭha* also are internalized; the gesturing as well as the symbolic speech—"twilight language"—would somehow take place within the yogin. A quite different line of inquiry could take up the problem of ambiguity and its relationship to the interesting ambiguities of scholarship surrounding the problem. Could it be that we can find no consistent interpretation here because this, too, is a characteristic of *saṃdhā-bhāṣā*? A candidate for the tantric goal is no doubt confronted effectively by the ambiguous meaning of yogic states; but he may also be confronted by the specific contradiction of secrecy coupled with rational inaccessibility, the paradox of definite references to indefinite states, the ambiguity of verbal equivalents whose relationship seems arbitrary at best. And he might find in the midst of the unsettling interchange of these equivalents that for him language has ceased to function in an ordinary way—like climactic time—because meanings overlap or intersect, like day and night at the time of twilight. To be more precise about these matters, however, we need more materials and more research.

Notes

1 *Nature and Grace: Selections from the "Summa Theologica" of Thomas Aquinas*, trans. and ed. A. M. Fairweather (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1954), p. 48.
2 *Mkhas-grub-rje's "Fundamentals of the Buddhist Tantras,"* trans. Ferdinand D. Lessing and Alex Wayman (The Hague: Mouton, 1968), p. 93.
3 Louis de la Vallée Poussin, "Tantrism (Buddhist)," Hastings's *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, as cited in translator's introduction to *The Candamahārosana Tantra*, chaps. 1–8, trans. Christopher S. George (New Haven, Conn.: American Oriental Society, 1974), p. 3.
4 Giuseppe Tucci, *Tibetan Painted Scrolls*, 2 vols. (Rome: La Libreria dello Stato, 1949), 1: 251; pp. 7 ff., n. 13.
5 Lama Anagarika Govinda, *Foundations of Tibetan Mysticism* (New York: Samuel Weiser, Inc., 1960), p. 53.
6 Mircea Eliade, *Yoga: Immortality and Freedom*, Bollingen Series (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1958), pp. 249–54; Agehananda Bharati, *The Tantric Tradition* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Co., 1970), chap. 6. It will be noted that our approach differs from that of Bharati, who uses a modern Western linguistic analysis of tantric materials. We, on the other hand, want to determine first to what extent a "linguistic analysis" exists already within the tantric tradition.
7 Accounts of these discussions can be found in Eliade and in Bharati. See also S. B. Dasgupta, *Obscure Religious Cults* (Calcutta: Mukhopadhyay, 1962), pp. 413 ff.
8 Alex Wayman, *The Buddhist Tantras: Light on Indo-Tibetan Esotericism* (New York: Samuel Weiser, Inc., 1973). See especially chap. 11.
9 For example, George states this opinion in his introduction to *Caṇḍamahāro-ṣana*.
10 *Mkhas-grub-rje's "Fundamentals,"* pp. 11–12, 219.
11 Wayman, pp. 32–33.
12 Ibid.
13 *Mkhas-grub-rje's "Fundamentals,"* pp. 218–19.
14 Wayman, p. 129.
15 *Mkhas-grub-rje's "Fundamentals,"* p. 219, note.
16 Ibid, pp. 219–20.
17 Wayman, p. 129.
18 Ibid., pp. 86 ff., 121, 133.
19 Alex Wayman, "Climactic Times in Indian Mythology and Religion," *History of Religions* 4 (Winter 1965): 295 ff.
20 See Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane* (New York: Harper & Row, 1961), chap. 2.
21 Wayman, "Climactic Times," p. 311.
22 Wayman, *Buddhist Tantras*, p. 130.
23 Translated by Wayman in *Buddhist Tantras*, p. 130, from the Sanskrit in Edgerton's *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Reader*, p. 55. For an alternative translation, see H. Kern, *Saddharma-pundarīka or the Lotus of the True Law*, Sacred Books of the East, no. 21 (New York: Dover Publications, 1963), p. 62.
24 Wayman, *Buddhist Tantras*, p. 129.
25 Ibid.
26 Govinda, p. 28.
27 Eliade, *Yoga*, p. 250.
28 Wayman, *Buddhist Tantras*, p. 129.
29 *Saṃvarodaya Tantra*, selected chapters, trans. Shinfchi Tsuda (Tokyo: Hokuscido Press, 1974), p. 239.
30 Alex Wayman, "The Buddhist Theory of Vision," in *Añjali* (Peradinaya: University of Ceylon, 1970), pp. 27–32. The passage is taken from the Aṅguttara-Nikāya.

31 *Saṃvarodaya*, p. 242.
32 *Hevajra Tantra*, trans. D. L. Snellgrove, 2 vols. (London: Oxford University, 1959), 2.3. 53–67, p. 60.
33 This is Wayman's translation based on Snellgrove's edition and following Snellgrove's translation in many cases. See Wayman, *Buddhist Tantras*, pp. 131–32.
34 Ibid., pp. 132–33.
35 Ibid., pp. 133–34; *Hevajra*, 2. 4. 6–8.
36 *Caṇḍamahāroṣana*, p. 64.
37 Ibid. See p. 56, where a woman as "insight" is introduced to the candidate as part of the "Insight Initiation"; the language used is similar to that of our verses. See also Wayman, *Buddhist Tantras*, p. 192, for the correlation of initiation rites and stages of yoga.
38 *Caṇḍamahāroṣana*, p. 68.
39 *Hevajra*, l:xiii, 66; 2:60–63, 145. For an alternative translation see Snell-grove; the reader is alerted to the fact that Hevajra Tantra 2. 3. 61a is edited by Snellgrove but left untranslated.
40 Kāṇha glosses *sandhir* as *abhiprāyaḥ* ("Intent, aim, meaning"), which gives support to our analysis that there is "meaning" here.
41 The point seems to be that the Hevajra Tantra is superior to other Tantras because it speaks about this matter (*śabditam*; Kāṇha, *kathitam*). That it does so with certainty (*niścitam*) does not contradict the fact of uncertainty within the teaching itself.
42 We are following Wayman's translations of the vocabulary which he gives in *Buddhist Tantras*, pp. 131–32. In conversation, Wayman has suggested that there may be a *mantra* element involved in the list which could be discovered by analyzing the sound of the Sanskrit. We consider this an interesting possibility worth our future study.
43 *Hevajra, buddhās*; Kāṇha, *buddāḥ*; Tibetan, *phyag rgya = mudrās*. We follow the Sanskrit here and take the meaning to be some "twilight" equivalence between the Buddhas and the *mudrās* who in fact do follow in the text. But we can observe here in the discrepancy between the Sanskrit and the Tibetan the problem of what constitutes the primary term.
44 Kāṇha says this is the "sign of attaining the Diamond-knowledge"; *śukra* here is the "liquid of woman's desire," as noted in *Caṇḍamahāroṣana*, p. 64.
45 Kāṇha provides the yogic reference: "by way of the yoga of the lotus and thunderbolt."
46 This thought is unclear and needs study; it may refer to the pernicious dangers from "outsiders" in Vajragarbha's commentary.
47 The implications of *svasamaya* need to be studied and may pertain to the "inner yoga" inquiry suggested in our final comment.
48 The reference is undoubtedly to the chapter in the Hevajra Tantra where *saṃdhābhaṣā* is taught as a "vocabulary list."
49 For the initial case, the Tibetan renders the Sanskrit for "wine is ... intoxication" as *ma da na chaṅ*, "wine is ... *madana*." But this is the reverse of what we would expect, since it is "wine" that appears in the "twilight" song. We judge this and similar cases to be aberrations since the list tends to meet our expectations.
50 Govinda (n. 5 above), p. 53.
51 *Saṃvarodaya*, pp. 269 ff.

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ON THE HISTORY AND PSYCHOLOGY OF THE *'DAS-LOG*

Lawrence Epstein

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The *'das-log* literature centers around a figure in Tibetan popular religious lore. Designating "one who has returned (*log*) from passing away (*'das*) "the *'das-log* occupies a place in Tibetan folklore and folklife, as well as in the literature associated with the worship of the bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara. There exists a number of written biographies of *'das-log*; additionally, they existed in the flesh in Tibet and the Himalayas, as they do today, albeit rarely, amongst the Tibetan refugee population.[1] Claiming to have undergone personally the experience of returning from death, they committed themselves to a life of telling their stories, bringing with them tidings from beings born in limbo (*bar-do*) and hell to the living, and conveying to men at large injunctions to moral conduct from the lips of the Dharmaraja, the Lord of Death, himself.

The *'das-log* biographies belong to an enormous and an ancient class of world literature; they are variations upon the theme of the spiritual journey. The spiritual adventure or quest "forms the principal theme in the oral literature of the Old World" (Chadwick 1942: 91), and it is found as a central motif both in myth and in many of the world's literary classics. The particular subtype of this theme to which the *'das-log* genre belongs is the journey-to-hell. The grim reality of hell as shaped by those that have purportedly been there has long been used as a didactic device in the literature of popular religion. In Western literature, such classical figures as Virgil, Orpheus and Er, whose myth is found in the final chapter of Plato's *Republic*, expand upon the themes of duty, justice and moral uprightness through this motif. The 'horrific detail of hell" (Owen 1970: 3) and the stories of those who visited it persisted in capturing the public imagination throughout Christendom, especially after the eleventh century and up through modern times (cf. Asin 1968: 46 and 177 ff.; Rowell 1974).

Much like the *'das-log* literature, many of the Western stories and legends about hell and the agonies of death which precede men's journeys there were told or expressly created for the purpose of convincing sceptics to mend their

ways. Thus we read in the *Dialogues of Saint Gregory the Great* (Gardner n.d.: 223 ff.) that

> God of his great and bountiful mercy so disposeth, that some after their death do straightaways return again to life, that having seen the torments of hell, which before when they heard they would not believe, they may now at least tremble at, after they with their eyes beheld them.

In Asian classical literature similar themes are widespread. Journeys to and descriptions of hell are recorded in such sources at the Vendīdād of the Zend-Avesta (Darmestetter 1898), the story of Ardā Virāf (West, et al. 1872), the story of Naciketas in the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*, and so forth.[2] In traditional China, it has been remarked, the simple peasant does not have "very clear or extensive conceptions of salvation except in terms of the picture furnished him by hell temples where future punishments are vividly depicted in relief" (Day 1940: 117), and that the "judgement of the soul in the courts of hell is by far the dominant feature of the peasant concept of what will happen to him after he dies" (*ibid.:* 118).

As Reynolds and Waugh (1977) have observed, death creates both a new experience and language which articulates many kinds of experience (*ibid:* 1) and death's presence "negates ordinary life structures ...... until all the normal meanings of an individual's life are regarded as having no ultimate worth" (*ibid.:* 6). Death, as a literary and an experiential motif, gains its metaphoric power in that it can act as a "paradigmatic model for passage to the superior" which transcends worldly dualities (Eliade 1977: 18, 21). Setting the stage of the *'das-log* biographies in the interstices of life and death, then, permits the retooling to the *'das-log*'s creative potential as a religious figure to occur.

Indeed, the major social and didactic function of the *'das-log* literature is just this: to teach or to remind an audience of laymen who either may have never known or had been accustomed to forget that the dogmas of Buddhism really work. The biographies of the *'das-log* stress three things: suffering and impermanence, the vicissitudes of karma, and how these may be overcome. As such, they are concordant with the basic teachings of the sūtras and the vast commentarial literature of Tibet. The *'das-log*, however, is more than just a teller of tales. He himself becomes a source of religious authority and an object of popular worship.

A question I wish to address here is how does an ordinary person become extraordinary, charismatic and invested with moral authority? How does the *'das-log* fit into a scheme of things vis-á-vis other types of charismatic religious authorities such as saints, lamas and founders of traditions on the one hand, and shamans on the other? The *'das-log* is a minor kind of prophet. In his formulation of the ideal type, Weber (1967: xxxiii–vi, 46ff.) notes that the prophet need not be a founder of a tradition, but a renewer of an already founded one.

Certainly, the doctrines which the *'das-log* preach are standard Mahāyāna fare. Cognitively, there is nothing new in what they say, but, as Weber maintains, they exhibit an equally important noncognitive qualification: a renewed and special zeal coming from a special personal experience. The questions I wish to ask here are what are the properties of this experience that cause the *'das-log* to undergo such a radical personal transformation? What are the properties of the *'das-log*'s message that make it an effective didactic device?[3]

The *'das-log* biographies are more than simple devices designed to teach Buddhism to the masses; they are complicated syntheses of various teaching traditions and historical movements in Tibet. Most of the biographies appear to date from the early sixteenth to the mid-eighteenth centuries, a period which saw intense internal missionizing and sectarian popularization in Tibet. During the previous 150 years, and continuing into the *'das-log* period, a number of prophets (*gter-ston*) lay claim to the discovery of new tantric ritual cycles, many of which incorporated local supernaturals and ritual practices, which purportedly had been concealed by the mythohistorical figure Padmasambhava in the eighth century for the renewal of Buddhism in degenerate future times. This was also the heyday of the "mad saints" Thang-stong-rgyal-po (1385–1510), Gtsang-smyon Heruka (1452–1507), Brug-pa Kun-legs (1455–1529) and Dbus-smyon, (dates uncertain). These characters forsook the academic life of the monasteries and travelled the highways and byways of Tibet, spending their time amongst simple folk to whom they preached in the vernacular, even vulgar, language.[4] It is to them we are indebted for the finest didactic poetry, songs, witty sayings and folklore from Tibet. Additionally, Thang-stong-rgyal-po is said to have invented *lha-mo*, the spectacular pageants which remain Tibet's most popular art form. Notably a heroine in one of these operas. Snang-sa 'Od-'bum, is a *'das-log*.

It was also during this period, before the establishment of a central authority, that princely houses, which either constituted sectarian groups themselves or formed close alliances with a particular sectarian group, contended with one another for territorial gain, political power and sectarian establishmentarianism. There seem to have been two effects of this period. First, a great deal of missionizing activity seems to have occurred especially along the southern and eastern marches of Tibet among Tibetanoid populations that practiced shamanistic-animistic religions rather than Buddhism. This geographic distribution corresponds to that of the *'das-log* biographies, whose subjects hail mainly from the east and the south. *'Das-log* stories from Central Tibet are scarce; in a recent collection of *'das-log* biographies, the compiler remarks in the colophon:

> Nowadays in Central Tibet no true collections of *'das-log* biographies are to be found. To exhort persons of various native abilities to do virtuous deeds for the welfare of all beings, I, Bya-bral-ba Kun-dga'-rten-'brel-rab-'byor, at the behest of my *mūlaguru* U-pa Rinpoche, have taken the responsibility of helping to so exhort them. In regard to the request: many deep teachings have been mercifully granted by

> Gshin-rje Chos-kyi-rgyal-po, who knows the means, who divides the fruits of sin and virtue, who is the reliable authority for the belief in the necessity to carefully calculate karma. To this I exhort all these world's beings.[6]

I hypothesize, for reasons which will be more fully discussed below, that there is an intimate connection between the *'das-log* phenomenon and the missionization of border regions.

The second effect of Central Tibetan sectarian policies upon the appearance of the *'das-log* literature is related to revivalistic movements in general. I have mentioned that the *'das-log*'s central function is to urge mankind to take cognizance of the basic tenets of Buddhism, and especially the salvation ethics of the Avalokiteśvara cult. It is well known that soteriological movements often occur during periods of stress.[7] In this connection some of the *'das-log* biographies mention the depredations of the Mongols against the politically disfavored sects in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Chos-dbang-rgyal-mo, a *'das-log* from a monastic community called Dge-'khor *bla-brang* in G.ya'-sgo, a village in Srad, revives from her trip to the nether regions, and finds the place deserted. "Recently, the people of the *bla-brang*, fearing the Mongols (Hor), consulted about going south to Sikkim ('Bras-mo-ljong). The excess people joined those from the *bla-brang* and have already gone south," she thinks (IV: f. 23b). It is likely that this passage refers to Gushri Khan's incursions against the Gtsang-pa in 1641–2 (see Shakabpa 1967, chap. 7). Additionally, the *'das-log* Karma-dbang-'dzin, from Lho-brag, meets in Bardo a young woman from Lho-stod Sne'u-gdong who was apparently killed by Mongols (I, A: 88). This might refer to one of the several incursions southward into Bhutan in the 1640s; however, other references seem to point to later times. In another scene in Bardo (IA: 176ff.), as a result of a nun's prayer, a number of persons are freed from hell. But several amongst them are not, including a Gtsang-gi-phyogs-na Mda'-dpon 'Gog-lung-pa, one Gangs-can-nas Dpon-mo (Cho(s)-skyid, and a Lcag-rtse Gri-gu'i-zhol-nas Gnas-chen Bsod-namsdar-rgya(s). It is just possible that these are veiled references to Khang-chennas and the father of the Seventh Dalai Lama, and hence the entire incident might allude to the 1714 invasion of Lha-bzang's troops or to events thereafter which saw Dzungar armies in and around Bhutan. As the *'das-log* biographies generally espouse Bka'-brgyud, Rnying-ma, or syncretic approaches to Avalokiteśvara worship, we can see why persecution of these groups at the hands of the Mongols, with or without the connivance of the newly dominant Dge-lug-pa hierarchs in Lhasa, may have been a cause of the *'das-log*'s call for a return to basic Buddhist morality.

The teachings of the Avalokiteśvara cult, along with other related Tibetan religious traditions, were instrumental in the missionizing and revitalizing efforts. The worship of the bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara is of some antiquity, appearing first in India and Nepal in the early centuries of the Christian era, but he is held in special regard in Tibet (see Snellgrove 1957). A popular myth

describes this deity as the progenitor of the Tibetan people and Tibet is popularly regarded as his "conversion field." Accordingly, Avalokiteśvara is also believed to have manifested himself in the world in such figures as Vimalamitra, Srong-btsan-sgam-po, Padmasambhava and other great historical figures who were instrumental in bringing to and promoting in Tibet a Buddhist civilization. Tradition has it that the first Buddhist work to appear in Tibet was the *Za ma tog*, a work principally concerned with this deity, whose special worship through the recitation of his mantra confers liberation from the saṁsāric world and rebirth in Sukhāvati, the paradise of Amitābha-buddha.[8]

In some senses, Avalokiteśvara himself serves as a role model for the *'das-log*. In the *Za ma tog gi bstan bcos*, for instance, there are stories of his activities before he comes to Tibet, in which he releases beings from hell through his compassion, including such notorious characters as the foul patricide Ma-skyes-dgra (pp. 323ff; 351 ff.). Additionally, this work appeared in Tibet along with the other major source of the Avalokiteśvara cult, the *Mani bka' 'bum*, during the period of intense missionary activity just before the appearance of the *'das-log* literature.[9] These works proffer salvation through the grace of Avalokiteśvara by the recitation of his mantra and the pertinent practices. The *Za ma tog gi bstan bcos*, for instance, summarizes passages from the twenty-one sūtras and tantras involving Avalokiteśvara which promise deliverance from the dire circumstances of worldly life (pp. 377–401). Further, in accordance with what we have already said above concerning the connection between soteriological activity and stressful events, we find in several works of this period directions for when they are to be used. The *Za ma tog gi bstan bcos* says (p. 416 ff):

Since the Buddhist doctrine has degenerated,
Not heeding the main doctrine
People consider important the syllables of magic.
Since they are greatly enthusiastic in their initial enthusiasm for religion which then declines,
There is no reason for true religion to spread.
Since they will not practice religious deeds, there is reason for true religion to decline.
Since there is much sectarianism, people exaggerate the differences.
Devils have taken up residence in the hearts of religious persons;
They revile each other and quarrel.
Mantrists are really *dam-sri*,
Laymen are really *'gong-po*,
Who revile each other and fight.
Women are really witches,
Who fight with their husbands and commit suicide.
Children are really *the-rang*,
Who misbehave.
Gods, *klu* and *gnyan* will get angry:

It will not rain when it should,
And there will be famine . . .
At such a time, if you wish for abundant happiness
Pray to Mahākarūṇika

In a similar vein, we find in a sixteenth century tantric cycle of Avalokiteś-vara:[10]

When the Buddhist religion declines
Meditators will become generals,
The saṁgha will lose the armor of forbearance,
Monastic establishments will fight and prepare fortifications,
Monks will always carry knives.
The voice of religion will be disrupted and laymen will speak.
They will lose their profound views, but they will be proud.
Monks will addict themselves to witch-women.
For dharma, they will shamelessly sing and dance,
Yellow-backed *'gong-po* will take over the kingdom
And carry off all the wealth.
They will banish the Buddha's words,
And the yellow-backed demons' song will be heard far and wide.
They will hanker after illusionary wealth,
And since they wear yellow skins, they will conquer the valleys and passes.
Seizing the prerogatives of lamas, they will wander around like dogs.
Disciples will break their vows and wander around like foxes.
They will break their vows, behave contrary to the Buddha's words and not atone.
There will be no practice of the *mantrayāna*.
Men will plunder and steal things,
Women will have no shame and will not protect their virtue,
Undisciplined monks will break their vows.
Hate between clergy and laity will burn like a fire.
Monks without vows will fight.
The Buddhist doctrine will be cast to the wind . . .

This period was marked by great swings in political fortune, due to the shifting alliances between princely houses and sectarian groups. This, in turn, led to both efflorescence and decline in the production of such texts as we have quoted above. Some who spread the Buddhist doctrine during the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries were forced to do so in the border regions because they themselves had been forced out of Central Tibet; others did so out of missionary fervor, and with political backing. Zhig-po-gling-pa (1524–83), who discovered the text we have quoted above in the very heart of Lhasa—the Central Cathedral

almost within sight of the Dalai Lama's seat at 'Bras-spungs—refers provocatively to "yellow-backed *'gong-po*," a remark no doubt aimed at the growing numbers of Dge-lugs-pa clergy. This, need we say, did nothing to endear him or his disciples to the Great Fifth, nor did it help in the various persecutions of the Bka'-brgyud-pa and Rnyingma-pa sects which were to follow over the next century or so.

The teachings of the Avalokiteśvara cult were spread among the lay populace not only by scholastics and prophets, but by *maṇi-pa* as well. This tradition was promulgated in Tibet by such figures as Guru Chos-dbang (1212–73), who is also amongst the first prophets. Guru Chos-dbang advocated that Avalokiteśvara's mantra be preached in the market place (i.e., made popular) so that all hearing it might be saved.[11] The following quotations are from his *Maṇi-bka'-'bum* (Ms. B: 217 ff.):

> Whenever any being sees these seven syllables of compassion, wherever he is born, he will have all the excellent qualities and live inseparably with Avalokita. O fortunate faithful ones! Listen to Chos-dbang's precepts! Do not doubt them!
>
> These are the qualities that come from seeing the Maṇi: The *Za ma tog bkod pa* says,
>
>> Whosoever as much as sees the Maṇi—men, women, boys or girls, or even game animals, birds, dogs, cattle, horses, asses and so forth—all will finally be born as bodhisattvas. They will have no sufferings such as birth, old age, sickness and death, meeting with unpleasant things, and being bereft of pleasant things . . .
>
> O all you fortunate ones that are gathered here! If that is the case, erect Maṇis at crossroads and in—and outside your houses. Taking up mirrors with the seven syllables, show them to everyone; and if they look at the seven syllables written there, your and everyone's concerns will become the very best . . .
>
> These are the qualities that come from hearing the Maṇi: It says in the *Don yod bzhag pa'i mdo*,
>
>> Those beings that hear the heart (seven syllables) will generate the virtues of several hundred thousand Buddhas. Whoever has abused a holy being, committed the five boundless sins, etc., all his sins will be purified in this very lifetime . . .
>
> If that is the case, even if beings like animals who do not know how to say the letters, as much as hear the sound, of the Maṇi being said, although they cannot make the sounds of the holy words, they will have the same great significance as for you and others . . .

These are the qualities that come from holding the Maṇi in the mind:

> . . . The *Mtshan rab yongs su bstan pa'i mdo* says, If one holds the heart-syllables in the mind, the five boundless sins, the five near sins, all one's sinful deeds will be purified, and one will never be reborn in hell, or as a *preta* or animal. One will not have sufferings of the body, speech and mind. One will be free of all fears from wild animals, *srin-po*, humans, demi-humans and diseases. One will understand the meaning of the *dharmakāya* and see the face of the *nirmāṇakāya*, Mahākarūṇika. One will have all good works and good things . . .

Hence, cast aside the worries which will not gain you any significant thoughts, and if you hold Maṇis and Mahākarūṇika in your mind at all times, you will renounce your own and others' suffering and gain bliss and loving-kindness.

These are the qualities that come from touching the Maṇi: The *'Khor ba dong sprugs rgyud* says,

> It is fitting for anyone to touch the seven heart-syllables with one's body and with whatever limb. If one drinks the water (touched with the Maṇi) with which one has washed, one will certainly be born in paradise. It is the same even for earth, wind and fire . . .

. . . Hence, if one asks blessings from all Maṇis, be they natural, carved in relief or drawn, and one touches them or drinks the water that has washed a statue, there is great benefit for so little toil, and the result is that one will be born in paradise.

These are the qualities that come from writing the Maṇi: The *Za ma tog* says,

> In causing the Maṇi to be writ, one causes to be written 84,000 gates of the dharma. The immediate virtues resulting from causing to be made in gold the many forms of . . . the Buddhas . . . whose number equals that of motes of dust, and causing them to be preserved every day, are exceeded by the immediate results of the qualities gained from writing a single syllable of the seven-syllable mantra. This is especially exhalted and beyond comprehension. Further, one will become as a king who governs saṁsāra, exercising power over the four continents, a heroic son, courageous, with perfect limbs, a complete victor over enemies.

. . . Hence, if you write the seven syllables—best in gold, next, in copper or vermillion, finally, in white or red earth—you will attain such great qualities.

These are the qualities that come from wearing the Maṇi: The *Za ma tog* says,

> If anyone ties the great six-syllable mantra to his body, O noble son, it will become a kind of *vajra*-body, a kind of relic-*stūpa*, ten million relics of the Tathāgata. Further, the body that bears the six-lettered mantra will not be clothed in any deed of desire, fear, ignorance, pride or jealousy. If the man that ties on the six-syllable mantra washes at a ford, any being that drinks or comes in contact with that water will have its sins and defilements purified and will not have a bad rebirth.

. . . Hence, compared to all those that meditate for their own purpose and have little benefit for others, the easy act of writing the Maṇi has great benefits, equal to being a Buddha.

These are the qualities that come from mediating on the Maṇi: The *Thugs rje chen po'i snyan rgyud* says,

> The Maṇi is the heart of the wish-fulfilling jewel. It is the inexhaustible treasury of the dharma-sphere. If one perpetually meditates upon and repeats it, one will, at best, become a Buddha in this life; next, purify the obstructions to Buddhahood; at least, in one's next rebirth be free of all accidents, and be born, springing from a lotus flower, at the feet of Buddha Amitābha. It is the perfection of Buddhahood in a single life and form. It has inconceivable qualities: it is beyond measure and explanation; it is unexcelled and transcends the limits of explanation.

. . . Hence, you who busy yourselves practicing the three gates that do not get you to the bodhisattva plane, if you meditate on the seven-syllable mantra of Mahākarūṇika in this life, later you will be born in paradise.

These are the qualities that come from saying the Maṇi: The *Za ma tog* says,

> When you say the powerful Maṇi-mantra, you assemble the Buddhas . . . Even the small living things in your food will become bodhisattvas that do not return. . . . Whosoever says this great six-syllable mantra will have no end of learning, a heap of wisdom, great loving-kindness and compassion. Everyday he will perfect the six *parāmitās*, will achieve the power of ruling over the place of the holders of the lineage. Some, even though they are dying, if they repeat the mantra in their minds, they will become bodhisattvas that do not return, be they kind persons or hateful. Finally, they will become Buddhas . . . Further, one can count all the motes of dust, and similarly, every drop in the ocean; one can count every sesamum filling a house a hundred leagues wide; one can count all the seeds that grow on the four continents; one can

> measure the weight of the king of mountains, Mt. Meru; one can wear out Mt. Rdo-rje-lcags by brushing it with a cloth of Benares cotton once every hundred years; one can count every hair of the beings that live on the four continents and every drop of rain that were to fall unceasingly for a year. But one cannot grasp the amount of merit from saying the six-syllable mantra a single time . . .

. . . Hence, all living persons, if you cease to lie, slander, prattle, use rough words and engage in meaningless conversation, and if you strongly say the Maṇi, it is the fulfillment of lotus-speech . . .

These are the qualities that come from explaining the Maṇi to others: The sūtras says,

> He who speaks the dharma of the Maṇi-*dhāraṇī* is very rare. He who speaks the dharma is like a Tathāgatha. View him as though he were a heap of all beings' virtue, a heap of gems; as speaking infallible truth, as a wish-fulfilling jewel of holy charity; as a ship that liberates beings. This mantra is the sacred heart of . . . Avalokiteśvara . . .

. . . Hence, all you *kalyānamitras*! Try to listen and think about the dharma when you are young; and when you are older, renounce the doctrine of prattle! Since worldly practice diverts your attention, give up your burdens. If you count and explain one word of the heart-mantra, you fix the three gates of the doctrine—hearing, thought and meditation—in your understanding. You will obtain all good things for your and others' benefit. Spread the Maṇi-doctrine to the ten directions of saṁsāra.

The role of *maṇi-pa* was not necessarily in high regard during these early years, especially by the sectarian "establishment." The eminent Sa-skya lama 'Phags-pa, for instance, sniffed that his rival at Qubilai's court, Karma Bakshi, was a mere *maṇi-pa*, implying that he was ignorant of higher teachings and more resembled an itinerant preacher who played on the credulity of the masses (see Epstein 1968: 3–4) However, the tradition did remain strong and other missionizing clergy, great and small, did follow in Guru Chos-dbang's footsteps. As special devotees of Avalokiteśvara, the *maṇi-pa*, by presenting a total, yet simple, system of worship, were instrumental in spreading Buddhism amongst the benighted. Typically, modern *maṇi-pa*—whether monastic specialists or laypersons—travel about with *thang-ka* and other impedimentia, depicting such things as the "Wheel of Life" and describing the sufferings characteristic of the different realms of existence. They are also the principal tellers of *'das-log* biographies (see, e.g. Macdonald 1967: plate i).

There is also a pan-Buddhist tradition with which the *'das-log* is connected. Maudgalyāyana, the disciple whose life story emphasizes Buddhist "magical"

power and action (as opposed to wisdom and scholarship as represented by Śariputra) was a *'das-log* of sorts.

> Born to a rich and pious householder, his father dies when he is three. When he grows up, his mother, who is as sinful as his father pious, sickens and dies. He then takes vows and eventually becomes an *arhant*. He asks the Buddha to show him where his parents have been reborn and the Buddha tells him to meditate. He has a vision in which he sees his father has been reborn in heaven and his mother in hell. He travels to hell by *ṛddhi*. The Dharmarāja and his record keepers can find no account of his mother and conclude she must be in Avīci, the deepest hell, whose inmates are so sinful in life that they fall there without passing before Dharmarāja's court. After long search and inquiry, he finally confirms that she is there. He is told that only the Dharmarāja, the Lords of the Five Paths and the Buddha can open that particular gate of hell. He returns to the Buddha, who lends him His staff, and with this implement Maudgalyāyana cows the demons that guard the gate and passes through. He mother is fetched, and when he sees her, "pierced with 360 iron nails, her head as big as Mt. Meru, and her waist as thin as a thread," he bursts into tears and tells his mother he will dedicate food and drink to her every day. His mother says, "In hell, there does not exist even the names 'food and drink'. How can your giving them to me help? Only doing virtue helps." He then tells her, "I will bear your sufferings for you". The demons who guard his mother say, "You must experience karma personally," and they lead her away. The Buddha sends Ānanda to fetch him back, and then He opens all the gates of hell. All the sinners are reborn in paradise, except Maudgalyāyana's mother, who continues to suffer rebirths as a *preta*, in animal forms, and then as a human before she gains liberation.[12]

The tale of Maudgalyāyana is popular in Mahāyānist countries. This tradition appears to be a Central Asian development, an elaboration of ancestor worship assimilated to a Buddhist format, the source of which is the *Avalambana-sūtra* that spread in Central Asia in the third century A.D. (deVisser 1935: 8ff., 67 ff.).[13] In China, the story is found in popular rituals designed to rescue women from Bloody Hell, whether they are consigned for the crimes of polluting the earth with menstrual blood and by the act of childbirth. The rescue of women, particularly one's mother, from hell is ritually accomplished by the woman's male descendents as an act of filial piety. They invoke a Buddha-figure (Maudgalyāyana) who descends to hell and does battle with the King of the Dead for possession of the woman's soul. Ritual performances symbolize acts of karmic retribution, where sexual desire and envy are depicted as causes of social conflict (Seaman 1976). These themes, as we shall see, are also prominent in the *'das-log* literature. In Japan, the Maudgalyāyana story has been assimilated to

indigenous rituals for honoring dead ancestors, and it now forms the mythical basis for the Obon festival, in which dead souls are comforted and given merit (see Smith 1974: 2ff.; Hori 1968: 200 ff.)

Additionally, China also has a popular religious tradition which, in spirit if not historically, is closely related to the *'das-log* phenomenon. Dore notes that "under the later Han Dynasty ... it happened that several cunning rascals escaped from Hades, and remembering the facts of their former lives, divulged the things that took place in the Land of Shades, and how the gods administered the world ..." (1920: 300). Other traditions also seem similar to the *'das-log*. The same source also notes (p. 46 ff.) that Yama, who rules the fifth court of hell, examines the dead. The souls of the dead promise to carry out unfinished vows "such as to repair monasteries, schools, bridges, or roads, to clean wells, to deepen rivers, to distribute good books, to release animals, to take care of aged parents, or to bury them suitably ... Evil men are led to a tower where they may see their native village ..." These can see their own families moving about, and can hear their conversation. They realize how they disobeyed the teachings of their elders, see that the earthly goods for which they have struggled are of no value, and how they committed all sorts of sinful acts. "While they observe their village they behold their erstwhile friends touch coffin and inwardly rejoice. They hear themselves called selfish and insincere." These exact or very similar scenes are, as we shall see, prominent in the *'das-log* biographies.

Additionally, and perhaps of greater significance for our present purposes, there is also the twelfth century legend of Miao-shan, popularly regarded as an avatar of Kwan-yin, thus paralleling the relationship of *'das-log* to Avalokiteś-vara emphasized in the Tibetan literature. Miao-shan is a princess who, contrary to her father's wishes, refuses to marry and prefers a life of religious seclusion. This incurs her father's wrath, and he orders her execution. A god in the form of a tiger carries her body off to a forest, where her soul is transported to a strange and silent land. A resplendent youth tells her he has been ordered by Yama to take her on a tour of hell. Here the King of Hell tells her she is admired because of the power of her prayers. Upon reciting the Amitābha-stotra all the souls imprisoned in the infernal regions are freed, and hell itself is transformed into a paradise. Yama then sends her back, her soul reenters her body, and she is allowed by her father to follow her pious persuasions (Dorre, *op. cit.*: 134 ff.).

In Tibet, an episode similar to Maudgalyāyana's descent to hell occurs in the life of Guru Chos-dbang, in whom the traditions of the *maṇi-pa*, *'das-log* and prophet appear to coalesce. As in the Maudgalyāyana story, Guru Chos-dbang's father is a rich and pious man, the most powerful figure in the region of Lho-brag. His mother is as evil as his father is good. They have no son, but by virtue of the father's prayers and good deeds, Padmasambhava reincarnates as their son. When Guru Chos-dbang is seven his father dies as the result of a pollution-illness caused by his wife's hate and pride. The father urges Guru Chos-dbang to convert his mother to goodness in his final testament. Coming to realize that he

is faced with a hopeless task, Guru Chos-dbang deserts his mother on the pretext of going off on a trading expedition to Lhasa; instead, he goes to meditate for nine years at the holy mountain Rtsa-ri. His family's *pho-lha* eventuates in the form of a bird and relates that his mother has died. He returns home to find her bones and the family property divided among the neighbors. He searches for her in all the realms and finally locates her in the "gateless iron fortress" after he tours hell and limbo, witnessing the horrors to be seen there. He splits the fortress with his staff and orders the guards to bring his mother out. She recollects her son's teachings on the Maṇi on the occasion of his father's funeral rites, and her single recitation of the mantra releases countless beings from hell. Guru Chos-dbang takes her soul from hell, but "loses" it, so that she is reborn as an ass. Dutifully he performs the ass's labor to spare her further suffering. After other suchlike adventures she is reborn a human and gains liberation. The similarity of this story to Maudgalyāyana's, plus the addition of some of the elements found in later *'das-log* biographies—such as the tour of hell and messages given to be taken back to the land of the living—appears to offer at once a legitimating link to a well known Buddhist source and to act as a template for the later *'das-log* adventures.

Finally, the so-called "Book of the Dead" traditions must be mentioned in connection with the *'das-log*. These traditions have been discussed in great detail and I do not intend to add more than a few comments. The "Book of the Dead" and the *'das-log* literature share many of the same historical sources; they are mutual redactions of the ancient world-wide literature to which we have already referred.[14] However, the "Book of the Dead" literature is basically a formal presentation of the death and limbo states from the point of view of a religious elite. The events of passing through the various stages of death process and the intermediate states of rebirth are given a careful and detailed exegesis, with such-and-such an event occurring on this-or-that day and having a meaning of thus-and-so. While the formal literature is meant to be read to a corpse, so that its *rnam-shes* might find understanding and enlightenment, or by a meditation master whose goals are the same, recitations and readings of the *'das-log* biographies are aimed at a living lay audience. The aims of this literature are accordingly less lofty and more preparatory in nature. Likewise, many of the complex theological notions found in the "Book of the Dead" are reduced to the simpler and more concrete language of metaphor, and the neat indexical "plot" of events in the former is drastically attenuated in the latter. While parallels can be found between the two genres, how much of their experience is actually explained in terms of the Bardo teachings appears to be a function of the *'das-log's* personal erudition. Whatever the case, none of the biographies fully contains all of the events reported in the theoretical literature.

In this connection it would be well to remember that religions, as cultural systems, are creative processes, which both objectify social experience and provide a template for the meaningful subjective interpretation of that experience (Geertz 1973). In all literary religious traditions certain axioms

constitute a central core of meaning about ultimate concerns, which persist over time and give continuity to the social and psychological structures of the culture concerned. Literary religions with elite clergy undergo historical transformations of both the form and content of these core axioms, making them comprehensible to ordinary persons. Such transformations often appear as relationships of analogy, which permit variant reworkings of meaning, or reinterpretations, to occur, which preserve the core axioms at the same time (see, e.g., Lichter and Epstein 1982). All ethicized religions must also confront experiential events for which their dogmas only marginally account. First among such disjunctive experiences are the problems of meaning raised by death (Berger 1969). Since everyday experience provides a reality test for a religious system, it follows that one's personal death can have no experiential value, nor can religious theories of death transcend speculation in its purest form. However, accounts of pseudo-death, such as the *'das-log* literature, even though they may not be wholly concordant with the descriptions of events described in the theoretical versions of the death process, certainly help to legitimate the latter.[15]

As I have already stated, the messages which the *'das-log* preach are rather standard Mahayanist fare and are similar to the teachings found in popular introductory texts or heard in sermons. They are not so much aimed at the transcendental goals and methods to achieve them for which Tibetan Buddhism is so justly renowned, for even simple philosophy is considered too abstruse for most clergy, let alone laymen. Rather, ethics, by which is meant a minimal understanding of the law of karma and the Four Noble Truths, constitute the focal point. In introductory texts, we invariably find discussions of the rarity and potential waste of human life, suffering, impermanence and death, and karma and ethical behavior.

On timeliness and the waste of human opportunity we find statements like Karma-chag-med's:

> There are many *kalpas*, but those in which the holy dharma is propogated are rare.
> There are many realms of being, but those in which a Buddha comes are rare.
> Though a Buddha come, those that dwell in the dharma are rare.
> From amongst the six kinds of beings, those that attain human form are rare.
> From amongst the four continents, those born in Jambudvīpa are rare.
> In Jambudvīpa, those who spread the holy dharma are rare.
> Though born there, those that have all their senses are rare.
> Though they have all their senses, those that recall the holy dharma are rare.
> Though they desire the holy dharma, famous lamas are rare.
> Though they meet them, those who attain guidance are rare.
> Though they get it, those able to use it are rare. (1970: 3b–4a).

In the same text we read (f. 5a ff.) that when death comes,

> The ability of medicine and protective ritual declines; were it ever a time to be miserly, it is come.
> Like the sun setting on the western peaks, were it ever a time which cannot be postponed, it is come.
> Though your retinue and servants are nearby, you've no power to take them with you; were it ever a time to go alone, it is come.
> Though your wealth be great, you've no power to take a single day's provisions; were there ever a time to go empty-handed, it is come.
> Singly, you wander alone in a land you do not know; were it ever a time to go wherever, it is come.
> Though your pain be great, there is no way to apportion it; were it ever a time to suffer each pang, it is come.
> Gradually you sink into unconsciousness and unrecognizable sensations and bright lights appear; were it ever a time when you knew not what to do, it is come.
> Sounds, the three rays, and hordes of peaceful and wrathful deities appear; it is like being a single dangerous criminal surrounded by an army; were it ever a time for great sensations of fear and terror, it is come.
> Cruel and fearsome messengers of Yama lead you away; the god and ghost who are born with you explain your virtues and sins; lying will not help, in the mirror of deeds the small letters are clear; were it ever a time to repent your past deeds, it is come.
> Though you desire virtues, there is no source where you can seek to buy or borrow them.
> The king of death will distinguish your virtues from your sins.
> You cannot repent of them; if you've not done so by now,
> You've imprudently and insincerely deceived yourself.
> If you cannot bear to be struck by a spark now,
> Hell-fire is seven times hotter than ours.
> Without perishing, you'll be burnt for a *kalpa*.
> If you know what to do, question yourself in whatever you do.
> If you cannot bear a winter's day dressed in thin clothes,
> You'll be stuck for a *kalpa* in a frozen pit.
> What will you do when you cannot even die to escape . . .

Such grisly reflections on death and the hereafter are of primary motivational importance in Buddhism. As Sgam-po-pa has written, "Meditation on death is of first importance and is the substantive cause (*rgyu*) of entering the dharma. Next, it is important as the metal of industriousness. Finally, it is important as the impetus to do holy dharma." (Rdo-rje-rgyal-po 1977:26).[16]

Communication of the concept of suffering to the laity confronts the problem

faced by all salvation religions: how, in the face of life's seeming sufferableness, does one demonstrate that life itself is suffering? and how does one move people to this view? This problem of conviction is probably exacerbated by Buddhism's radical salvation view which emphasizes complete renunciation. Traditionally, texts and sermons mention three types of suffering. The suffering of pain (*sdug-bsngal-gyi sdug-bsngal*) and the suffering of change (*'gyur-ba'i sdug-bsngal*) seem intuitively acceptable; one bashes one's thumb and it hurts, or one loses his fortune or a loved one dies and so one suffers. The third type, compound suffering (*'du-byed-kyi sdug-bsngal*), is a more bitter pill to swallow. Let us take, for example, a cup of tea; the ubiquitous fluid that lubricates most Tibetan transactions is, according to this view, nothing but a cup of sin.

> Tea is a plant sown in China. When the seeds are planted and the leaves cut, the insects killed are beyond counting. When bearers come carrying the tea down from Dartsendo, each man carries a load of sixty-two sections. Since they carry it by supporting the whole load with tumplines around their heads, the skin on their foreheads is worn away and one can see the grey of the bone showing through. Yet still they carry. When they reach Dotok, they load the tea on *mdzo*, yaks, mules and so forth. When they travel on, all those animals are made to undergo the inconceivable suffering of being made to serve with saddle sores on their backs and cinch sores from the braided ropes underneath. Also when the tea is traded, it is sold only by deception and barter which take into account neither honesty or modesty.
>
> The tea is traded for merchandise, usually for things like sheeps' wool and lambskins. In the summertime, the wool consists of an uncountable quantity of single strands of hair and bugs, such as sheep lice or other little things. Usually when the wool is shorn with a knife, the bugs' heads are cut off or they are cut in two. The ones that are inside the wool come out and are killed. The ones that do not die this way get twisted up in the wool and suffer a bad death by strangulation. Regarding lambskins, as soon as a lamb is born, it has all its senses. It can feel pleasure and pain, and it looks out for itself. At the beginning of its life, a time when it is happiest, it is killed straightaway. Though it be but an ignorant animal, it rejoices in being alive, and it suffers the experience of being killed. If one were to regard as well the suffering of the ewe whose offspring has been killed, it should be seen as that of a mother whose only son has died.
>
> (Dpal-sprul 1971: 117–8)

Such examples are meant to show that if suffering constitutes life itself, it is because the body is subject to physical pain, life's joys are illusions that come to an end, and because of life's entanglements, which are created through attach-

ments, cravings and desires, be they so simple as a cup of tea. Further, although the texts obviously focus upon virtuous action as a means to improve one's karmic chances, they also regard sin, which must be paid for sooner or later, as inherent in any action. The *'das-log* Dbu-bza' reminds us

> It is natural that half of virtue is sin,
> It is natural that half of beer is water,
> It is natural that half of day is night. (XII: 608)

It is such notions as these that clearly draw the frontier between elite and popular understandings of Buddhism; the question now becomes this: lay Tibetans, probably like most other people who do not spend the better part of their waking hours worrying about the next life (at least until they get old) and who try to make the best of this one, have certain standards of happiness and ideas about what constitutes the good life. These are based upon particular ideas about bodily states (health), making a decent living (wealth) and agreeable relationships with others (love and friendship). Health, wealth and love are, for the most part, positive states achieved transactionally; they are world-involved. The philosophical view of happiness, to achieve bliss in another "world" and to escape this one, is quite another thing; it is based on a universalistic psychology which sees men driven or motivated by hate, lust and ignorance which: (1) negates the body as a thing-in-itself and directs attention to the state of the soul (*rnam-shes*); (2) abjures involvement with material things; and (3) denounces the best and closest relationships of love and friendship as destructive when they are particularized.[17]

The common strategy in all the popularizing traditions is the reduction of high order and abstract concepts to concrete metaphor, which plays upon common fears of emotional and somatic distress. Presumably, the aim of such reductionism is to arouse an imagery of those proximal experiences in such a way as to cause the listener to link them to ultimate concerns. Tibetan Buddhism seems always to have recognized that the same means for everyone is not always appropriate to desired ends. As the biography of Prince Choskyi-dbang-phyug reminds us (p. 3 ff.)

> Some do it by Vajrayana and gain liberation in a single life and form.
> Some do it gradually by philosophy (*mtshan-nyid*).
> Some do it, entering the doctrine successively through the three turnings of the wheel.
> Some do it by degrees through stories and didactics . . .

For instance, in the biography of A-lce Rig-stong-rgyal-mo we find the following verses in which the experience of pain and destructive emotional states are linked to the realms of possible saṁsāric birth, along with the ethical mode that alleviates such possibilities:[18]

A-ra, a-na and *a-tsa* (three exclamations for 'ouch'), these three
Are your introduction to the experience of hell.
Have you done merit?

Hunger, thirst and poverty, these three
Are your introduction to the *preta* realm.
Have you given charity?

Not understanding, not knowing and ignorance, these three
Are your introduction to the realm of animals.
Have you meditated on patience?

Danger, prejudice and attachment, these three
Are your introduction to the experience of suffering birth and death (= humans).
Have you kept the discipline?

Hatred, jealousy and causing harm, these three
Are your introduction to fighting (= asura).
Have you meditated on kindness?

Pride, egocentrism and arrogance, these three
Are your introduction to falling at death (= gods).
Have you been humble?

Anxieties over living the "good life" are also employed as transformers in depicting the futility, waste and ultimate illusion of proximate human goals:

The A-lce went to a village where a household had invited many people. She went there, and five or six sinners, having killed a '*bri*, were eating meat, drinking blood and drinking beer in order to get drunk. They said, "A-lce, welcome! Eat some meat, drink some blood and sing us a song;" A-lce said, "Alas, alas! What a pity!" and she shed tears of blood. Then she sang this song:

. . . When you pass over from this life,
Nothing other than the holy dharma will be of help.
Were it not better to renounce sin and evil deeds?

When you are old, with your mouth and nose caved in and tartar covering your teeth,
All your friends and relations will surround you.
When your breath comes in fits and starts,
Naught but the holy dharma will help.
Were it not better to give up worldly deeds?

Forsake your estates and lofty palaces!
Look amazed at the wealth you've saved!

When you go, empty-handed, upon the road to Limbo,
Naught but the holy dharma will help . . .

Birds and dogs will eat your beautiful body, which is but illusion.
You will leave behind the pet names your parents gave you.
When your soul goes along the fearful road,
Naught but the holy dharma will help.
Were it not better to ask for religious teachings?

When the dark red wind of karma impels you,
You'll be received in the blackness of ignorance.
When Yama has done with you,
Only the holy dharma will help.
Were it not better if you roved the solitary retreats as an anchorite?

During the short time you've attained human form,
Having not rested for a moment in doing sins and evil deeds,
Will you be able to withstand experiencing hell?
Learn how to repent!
All of you, for taking the life of even one being . . .

Will you be able to be burnt alive in hell?
Here, at the border of where you go either up or down,
If you've done nothing but sin,
Practice the divine religion! (p. 53 ff.)

. . . Then A-lce went to a village. In a nice house, there was an elderly man, rich in manpower and cattle. He said, "Girl! Come in and give us a song!" A-lce said, "Ha, ha! Oṁ maṅi padme hūṁ! O matchless rich man, hear me!

If you want to know about nomads,
A mighty yak, black with white shanks,
Eats grass when it's hungry
And drinks spring water when it's thirsty.
If you think that yak is happy,
In the end
The black yak-master (butcher) comes.
On his head he wears a rush basket.
He takes the yak, leading it to the middle of Mon land.
He casts it upon water and rocks,
He pierces its feet with nails,
Hits it on the head with an axe,
Pierces its heart with a dagger,
Though the yak's cervical vertebrae are long . . .
Alas! Poor beast . . .
In your present human form
Do divine dharma!

Rich man! In the city of butchers
Men and women who live happily
Use meat for food
And beer for drink.
They have more leisure than leaders who cheat.
But they'll know the suffering of damnation.
Yama's messengers will lead them away.
They'll see Limbo with their own eyes.
They'll boil in the Iron Cauldron,
Be pressed beneath the Iron Mountain,
Their bodies pierced with iron nails.
Molten brass will be poured down their mouths.
There will be no liberation for a *kalpa*.
Alas! You poor butchers . . .

Know this! You that live happily
In your four-square houses!
Above you've gathered human wealth,
Below you've gathered cattle-wealth.
Your grandsons are arranged like gods in rows.
You dine on food of the most delicious kind.
Your bodies are clothed in the softest wool.
Everyone respects you.
If you think these rich elders are happy,
Sooner or later when they get sick
And all the doctors have given them up,
Their friends and relatives will surround them.
The rich ones will gasp for life
And experience the suffering of disease.
The worker-*yamas* will lead them away.
And they'll come out on a ledge in Limbo.
They'll fetch the scale of virtue and sin
And weigh the white and black stones.
In accordance with the Dharmaraja's terrible words,
They'll be hauled off to hell . . .

O you poor rich folks!
Now that you've the will
Won't you do divine dharma, give charity well,
Make up your minds?
Won't you accomplish and request religious teachings?
Are you not afraid? (p. 58 ff.)

With this brief introductory background, we may now turn to an examination of the biographical content itself. The *'das-log* biographies bring together as a

class an extremely disparate bunch of persons, linked only by the fact that they share a remarkable experience in common. The *'das-log* is seized with an illness and enters a catatonic state; for all intents and purposes, insofar as onlookers are concerned, he dies.[19] Our task will be first to examine in some detail the physical and affective states of the *'das-log* previous to the onset of their catatonia. What are the characteristics of such states? Can we postulate the existence of preconditions for their seizure in terms of intrapsychic or social-psychological stresses that may help us explain why certain individuals undergo such experiences? If we are dealing with an organic disorder or a genetic one, we cannot of course discover it through texts alone. Instead, we must accept, on faith, and for the sake of argument that there are sociopsychological reasons for them. States of dissociation and hallucinosis may be regarded as defense mechanisms against a range of "disorders" during which there is an intensification of internal perceptions and ego withdrawal. Although I will defer a discussion of this psychological state until later, it will behoove us to see if any such evidence can be found here.

Gling-bza' Chos-skyid (III, A: 306 ff.)

> I, Chos-skyid, after being sick for a full sixteen days, cast lots, did astrology, took medicine, and did all kinds of curing rituals, but to no avail; I got worse. I thought that now it seemed I would die. When I was small I thought I would become a nun, but my parents and brothers did not let me. In my youth, I did not get a single initiation, authorization or introduction to the dharma. I had made no great progress in meditation. I wished to establish a relationship of giving food and support to a few lamas and teachers, but, other than how this would benefit me. I had no other great root virtues. Now since I greatly regretted this, and thought I was dying, I was decimated. I had been killing twenty or thirty yak and sheep every year. Amidst all that, I had not a single virtue, just sin. My husband and sons did not know even how to perform great virtues. Since they greatly desired wealth, they had no faith. I thought, "They do not know how to give things to make great merit. But I have to tell them to make some merit for me," and I told them, "Come here! Now this disease will not release me. I've no great virtue of accumulated merit. Incidentally, I've acquired many sins. For my funeral give one-third of my wealth, half of my turquoise and coral to my daughter and half for my funeral. Those that give as much as a knife for virtue can count on the three gems in return. It is best if you practice the dharma. If it doesn't come about so, make both my boys monks. Finally, shun sin and be well intentioned toward the dharma. If you act otherwise, you'll greatly regret it when you die. I want you to promise me that you'll not let my boys and girl fall into the hands of another laywoman."

My husband said, "If I spend one-third of our wealth, what will we four eat? Girls are the ones who want jewels. If we don't get a woman to take care of us, because the children are young, it will be difficult to maintain the family. We will spend an amount for your funeral, which we won't be sorry for later. That's the way it is, and I can't promise we will spend an exact amount."

Now because of what he said, it seemed to be that I'd be given no great virtues. When I had the power to do so, I didn't know enough to give my jewels to lamas and teachers or how to do the dharma, and I was sad. Thinking that he would let the children fall into the hands of another lay-woman, I felt pity that my children would suffer, and while I was in this state, my head and body went awhirl.

Karma-dbang-'dzin (I, A: 7–16)

When she was in her mother's womb and when she was born there were auspicious omens. From a tender age it was apparent she was intelligent, compassionate, pious and virtuous. She did not care for worldly things. The *sde-pa* of 'Og-gro sent a message to her parents importuning them to send her as a bride. Her parents, being of a worldly turn of mind, wanted her to go. An arrangement was reached with 'Og-gro, and she went as a bride. Once there she met with lamas, meditators and hermits and received from them teachings and initiations.

One time she was making preparations to do retreat at the hermitage of Khra (alt. Phra) phu. All the villagers gave her things for the retreat and accompanied her there. At the hermitage, she developed a great faith in the Buddha, and although her relatives decorate her with ornaments she thinks, "Now, though I'm decorated with ornaments, this life is like a dream. Hence, when one achieves a precious human form, although one may not have the confidence that one can lead other beings to paradise, if one does not have some fear of death, how can one gain it? If I do not implant an understanding in my own mind, how will it come about?" She then received further instruction from Grub-chen Nor-bu-bkra-shis and practices his teachings for about three months. On the fourth day of the Monkey-month she had a vision of Guru Rinpoche, holding a vessel and a nectar-filled skull. He tells her the nectar will aid the eighteen kinds of *mdze*-disease and teaches her a mantra. To one side of him is Tārā in the form of an eight-year-old girl. She remembers her former births and finds a deep compassion for all beings.

One year passes, and on the eleventh day of the third month of the Dragon-year she is stricken with a terrible disease. She recognizes no one and loses her taste for food and drink. She wants to see her kin, but

> she cannot get up or if she is awake she wishes to go back to sleep. On the following day her handmaiden, a child named Bsod-nams-tshe-ring, says, "Mistress! You have shadows around your eyes and your nose is sunken. Isn't it best that I go to the village and tell your husband to come here?" Karma-dbang-'dzin thinks that if she cannot stand a little illness she will never be able to withstand the rigors of religious endeavor and she tells the servant to wait until morning. By midafternoon, however, she gets the shivers and is terribly thirsty. She tries to quench her thirst, but the water pours out of her nose. Then the signs of the dissolution of the four elements begin. She begins to lose the use of her senses, her sight diminishes and she cannot recognize her friends; her hearing fails and although she knows that things are being said, she cannot catch the words, and so forth. Visions of her next life begin to appear. She is, however, mentally aware of her surroundings. She recollects her loved ones and cannot dismiss them from her thoughts. She remembers all her sins, regrets them and cries.[20]

Bla-ma Byams-pa-bde-legs (XI: 12–17)

> In the Fire-Male-Monkey year, in the first month, while in meditative retreat, he is stricken with a bad illness. He loses his body warmth and spits bloody phlegm. Doctors attend him and curative rites are performed, but to no avail. He becomes worse. "On the fifteenth, an inauspicious day with the reigning lunar mansion in the descent, and when demonic delusions abound, the sky was clear, and there were *stūpa*-shaped rainbow clouds and a cloth-like road which everyone saw. A rain of flowers fell and there came forth the delicious smell of incense. I performed reverential petitions to A-khu Rinpoche and did meditation. In the retreat I did whatever I could within my experience, but I could not control my body and the stages of dissolution appeared in succession.

Other *'das-log* simply report that they sicken and "die." When it is mentioned at all the disease is said to be caused by phlegm. Compared with bile and wind-caused diseases, these are generally considered to be much harder to cure and more life-threatening. Additionally, phlegm is a cooling agency, and hence might account for the corpse-like condition of the soma (I am indebted to E.V. Daniel for this observation).

What seems evident in the statements of the *'das-log* is the fact that they are under various kinds of stress. Both Karma-dbang-'dzin and Gling-bza' Chos-skyid grieve over their frustrations of having been forced to lead the lives of ordinary worldly women, when their earlier inclinations would have them fulfilling a religious role. This situation is exacerbated in Gling-bza's case, and as we shall see, in Karma-dbang-'dzin's, by their relationships with their kinsmen,

whose interests are solely this-worldly. In Chos-skyid's case, mundane, although not unreasonable, family interests appear so dominant, that her husband cruelly denies her dying wishes and hence what she feels are her last-ditch chances at salvation. Another *'das-log*, Byang-chub-sengge, whose case we shall examine in some detail below, has a somewhat similar case in structure but not in content. As a monk, he is free of family dependencies, but experiences a different kind of failure. He doubts the veridicality of a vision of Avalokiteśvara, and this, he says, brings on his "sickness." Tibetans maintain that meditation is not an exercise to be lightly regarded. Generally one must lay a scholastic groundwork before one engages in meditative practices. Since it is the *sine qua non* of monkhood to be a successful practitioner of the meditative arts, failure therein is often said to cause despair and even mental disorder of a psychotic type.[21]

In the vision of the death process that follows, the *'das-log* encounters many of the various phenomena that are duly reported in the Bardo literature, as well as in many clinical and mystic visions from all over the world. In most of the biographies, the various lights and colors, sounds and shapes encountered receive some degree of elaboration. Byang-chub-sengge, for instance, delivers a lengthy discursus on the entire process (X A: 16–36), while others, e.g., Gling-bza' 'Chos-skyid (III A: 309–11), recollect a lama's teachings on death and dying and feel somewhat comforted for the moment:[22]

> I had a vision that I was going below the ground and I felt scared; it was as though many people were holding me down from above. After that I felt as though I were being moved to and fro in a great ocean, and I felt the misery of the cold waves on my body. The whole earth was filled with fire, and I suffered as if my body were being scorched in a great burning roar. After that there appeared red, white and yellow paths, something like dusk, great roaring sounds. Then suddenly, there was the bliss of remembering nothing. Then one moment I felt as though I'd arrived in a crackling butter lamp; just then there appeared over my head many rays being expelled from the midst of a five-colored light. At the tip of each ray were several beings with human bodies and heads of different forms. Their eyes gaped like the sun and the moon, and they carried in their hands many different kinds of weapons. There came forth the roar of a thousand dragons, saying "Ha, ha! Hūṁ, hūṁ! Kill! Strike!" I had an inconceivable fear. A lama had instructed me before saying, "All lights are your own light, all rays your own ray, all forms your own form, all sounds your own sound. They are the glow of your own mind." As soon as I thought this, the omens disappeared.

The next section of the biographies provides us with what I believe to be the most fruitful materials for analysis. Here we see the now freed soul torn between lingering attachments of a social nature which initially kept it chained to its

former environment and its ultimate flight from the world of men. Buddhism is founded on the assumption that attachment to the world, its physical forms and abstract principles of operation, causes suffering. There is a basic irony here; relationships between an ego and the objects in its physical and social surroundings may be in fact cherished and founded upon the most noble of human sentiments, such as love. Even Buddhism touts human existence as the highest of life forms. But it also urges men to abandon such feelings in order to gain salvation. In order to do so, a person must gain a new understanding of himself and his affective states, so that ego-involved sentiment is transformed into an understanding of how basic psychological and somatic drives operate and how they may be overcome. The following scene depicts the beginnings of this transformation by showing the slow dawning of disillusionment with the world. An existential despair replaces his lingering attachments to things he loves the best, as the *'das-log* is ignored by his loved ones and he sees their deceits.

Gling-bza' Chos-skyid (III, A: 311–27).

Then when I looked at my own bed, there was placed there the stinking corpse of a large pig covered with my clothes. My husband and children and all our friends and neighbors from the village came, crying. Some wrung their hands and wept, and simultaneously I heard the sound of a thousand dragons roaring. Then a hail of pus and blood, the size of eggs, fell and it hurt intolerably. As soon as they stopped crying, the roaring and hail stopped, as well as my pain. Then my brother, Chos-sgron, said, "What good will staying here and crying do? Since there is no one at all to perform transference (*'pho-ba*), we have to invite twenty-one monks, starting with a mantrist. It's best we perform rites and prayers. Since elder sister had faith in Yogi Thugs-rje-rin-chen, we'll invite him and ask him to perform the wake (*rgyun-bzhugs*). I'll look for four men to recite the *Vajra-c-chedika*." No sooner had he said that then my husband said, "We must summon four Bon-po lamas." Chos-mgon said, "Although sister had no faith in Bon-pos, you do whatever you like. I'm going to invite a mantrist and the Yogi," and he went off. My nephew Khro-bo-skyabs and my husband went off with six loads of barley and gave them to the neighbors to make *rtsampa*. I thought, "What are they doing? A curing ceremony? My disease has gotten better. You don't all have to gather here" But they didn't even toss me a glance and I felt peckish. I didn't think I'd died. The middle boy came, bringing chaplain Thugs-rje-rin-chen, and he went away, after giving him the things necessary to recite the *Vajra-c-chedika*. The chaplain said the refuge formula and did some rites, and I felt a great joy.

Then in the evening about twenty teachers and Yogi Thugs-rje-rin-chen came. I greeted the lama and asked for his blessings, but he didn't

give them and I wondered why. As I stood there, discomforted, the Yogi placed his hand on the pig's head and recited the refuge formula and prayers: "Now, Chos-skyid, your death has come. Don't be attached to your boy or to your wealth and food, but meditate on the particulars of your mind. Say, 'May the white A and the white drop Waṁ come into my heart! May I be together with Buddha Amitābha in Sukhāvati.' May we both go there!" As soon as he said this, I thought, "But I'm not dead! My body is just as it was before. After the lama says these things, I'll go." But since I was afraid of the pig, I was unable to go past it. The lama said, "Phaṭ!" and I became happy and blissful. The lama said, "The transference is done. Body and mind are separate." Then they made tea and food and invited people in. They gave me nothing. The Yogi said, "Girl! Bring your mother some food"!' and my daughter put some porridge on a plate along with a bit of meat, and, together with a cup of tea, placed it near the pig and said, "Mother! Please eat!" I thought, she didn't give it to me but put it near the pig's corpse, and I felt nauseated and despaired at what my daughter had done.

I felt hungry and thirsty, but I endured it. The Yogi said some mantras, such as the Maṇi, and burnt bits of my portion of food in the fire. I smelt it and received a vision of eating and drinking, and my hunger and thirst were pacified. The lamas and teachers were completing the altar arrangements and they performed the rites. The monks and Thugs-rje Rinpoche sat in meditation. I was angry at all of them. They didn't give me my share of food. The suffering of my mind and body was boundless. My mind, not having a body to stay in, was wafted like a feather in the wind, moving to and fro. Now I thought about what I should do. I thought I had to take my jewels and wander around the country. All my children were saying 'mother' and weeping. Again a hail of pus and blood fell, and I had immeasurable suffering. When they ceased, so did the hail. Further, without my seeing the source, there was a sound. My body felt heavy and sapped of strength, and my mind felt nervous and confused. Thinking what was best for me to do, I stood in front of the mantrist. I thought, "He is a Bka'-gdams-pa monk. I don't know if he'll let a lay-woman be in his presence," and I hid behind him. I felt better listening to him recite the rites, but it was unable to calm my fears. Thinking what was best for me to do, I went before the Yogi. He had not a defilement on him, inside and out, and I found myself in the presence of an image of the four-handed Avalokiteśvara. He said, "What a pity!" Thugs-rje Rinpoche was meditating on emptiness, like a rainbow, and there was no difference between him and me. The confusion of my mind became calm and I felt immeasurable joy.

Then after a while I recovered my senses. The others were eating.

Like before, they didn't give me any food, but placed it before the pig. Like before, the Yogi burnt my portion and I had a vision of eating and drinking. Then in a while I prepared to go, and then a man said, "Chos-skyid, come here!" I went to look. I thought it was my father, who said, "Follow me, I've something to show you." Then he said, "I'll send you back quickly." I thought, "Here at home there are many lamas and teachers sitting; they're all mad at me. My husband and children didn't give me food." I felt powerless. I thought I had to leave and immediately came to a barren plateau.

Byang-chub-sengge (X, A: 36–43)

Then I thought I had to go inside and I arrived there. Thinking I had to go home, I got to my family's house. Greens were cooking on the stove and I asked for some, but they didn't give me any. Thinking they were mad at me, I thought I'd go elsewhere. There were some people praying on the roof and I went there, but no one said anything to me. I thought all my relatives and acquaintances were angry at me. Then I went behind the door, and someone was making a wheel for the water-mill. I asked what he was doing, but he didn't answer me. I thought he was deaf. Then I went into the mill and my nephew (*bu-tsha*) was grinding flour. I thought I'd like some *rtsam-pa*, but I was afraid to make my nephew get suspicious. I asked, "Nephew, are you making this flour for an offering?" but there was no answer. I thought, "These evil people aren't talking to me. I'd like to eat some flour." and reaching into the mouth of the flour bin, the mill stone shook. My nephew said, "Is a dead ghost walking around?" and he took out his knife. I said to him, "The dead are walking? Did your parents die? No one has died here." But he didn't answer me. I thought, "It looks as though something is harming his *rtsam-pa*," and I fled behind the mill door Then I got thirsty. At the river's edge there was a young girl fetching water. I asked her for some, but she didn't say anything to me. Then I thought, "I'd like a drink of water," and I put my hand into her vessel. It fell from her shoulder and the bottom broke. I thought the girl would get angry, and like before I fled quickly away. A neighbor was drinking beer, but he didn't invite me to have any, and I thought everyone was angry at me. Thinking I had to go behind the door, I went and there was a horse. Grabbing it by the tail, the horse fell down. I was also very frightened. Then I came out from behind the door and the horse died. Then an old lady came along carrying a load of wool. I said, "What are you going to do with the wool?" but she said nothing. Then I thought, "I want to take a bit of wool," and when I reached out my hand, all the pieces of wool were carried away by a wind. The old lady ran around in a dither. I thought, "All the wool has been carried

off by the wind. What should I do?" and I ran off. Thinking I should go to the monastery, I went off, and following on the road behind me a dog came barking. A girl on the roof of a house said, "Rotten mutt! A ghost has made you bark." I thought, "She seems to have called me a ghost." I said to her, "Show me a god which isn't a ghost!" but she said nothing and went back inside. Then, thinking I had to go to the monastery, I arrived there. In my room there was a corpse. I was very frightened. Its arms and legs were stretched out and it faced downwards. Before it were two frightening hunting dogs. I took fright and said, "Oṁ maṇi padme hūṁ." Then I went and looked; it was tied with its feet behind its head. I was very much afraid of it. Then, as soon as I had thought, "It seems I've died," I arrived before a great mountain.

Typical of these scenes are elements which allegorize dominant Buddhist values involving the consequences of attachment and which play upon the dominant media of human happiness and social values. Three "obligatory" events occur in all of the *'das-log* biographies.

First, the "soul" undergoes an autoscopic experience, seeing its own corpse of which it is frightened. Invariably, one's own body appears in distorted, usually animal, shape, a dog, a pig, a snake, etc., which causes the *'das-log* to feel nauseated and loathing. To make matters worse, the *'das-log* may see its own relatives offer food to this sickening carcass, while he himself is tormented by hunger and thirst, which remains unrelieved except for the efforts of the monks. Here is a comment on the value of the body: rotting animality; and on bodily states in general: loathsome and sickening. This view of the corporeal is expressed in many Buddhist texts which recommend a day in the graveyard as a lesson in the consequences of bodily attachment (see, e.g., Bond 1980). This motif also stands in contrast to the states of bodily beauty promised as a *guṇa* of Avalokiteśvara worship.[23]

Second, the soul, not yet fully realizing it is "dead," now sees its relatives crying over the corpse. This results in its being painfully stricken by a "hail of pus and blood," a rather obvious concretization of the concept that sentimental attachments ultimately cause suffering. But why pus and blood? The salience of these substances is never explained in the biographies, yet present in every one of them. The following is a chain of associations, which elaborates upon different levels of understanding. The first proposition is that tears become pus and blood. Generally speaking, a clear limpid liquid becomes viscous colored liquids, which then undergo secondary transformations to solids. Further associations are to be found in statements saying that the *'das-log* was stricken so hard that his flesh and bone were cut, thus completing the substantivation, i.e., pus = white = bone, blood = red = flesh. From general Tibetan associations we may derive bone from father from white liquid (pus/semen); and flesh from mother from red liquid (blood/menstrual blood). On the other hand, clear limpid liquids

have two ethnographically verifiable associations; they may be tears (liquid from the eye as opposed to the sexual organs) or *bindu*, the drop or spot signifying creative potential in the heart (mind). These in turn stand for compassion and for the potential of the manifest body (*sgyu-lus*) to be transformed into the wisdom body (*ye-shes-lus*) and for the *bodhicitta* of the adept, the comingling of his "semen" with his *mudrā*. But *bodhicitta* is also *pha-ma'i byang-sems*, the white and red drops in the corpse's heart, which are the remnants of the original germ of the parents. These are associated with the life—and "para-sympathetic-" winds in the embryo. Normally found at the forehead's vein-*cakra* and at the navel's, they migrate to the heart at death, encapsulating the mind in a tent-like structure. When this structure collapses, their gross remnants appear at the nostrils or urinary opening, signalling the departure of the *rnam-shes*. Here we have at least three sets of associations, all related and all reiterating the same message. The first, the mystical or yogic, is connected to soteriology through the application of means (compassion/tears) to wisdom, in which the "sexual" release of the yogin in connection with his female coadept (real or imagined) renders the transformation of *bindu* to red and white liquids in the internal body to nothingness/bliss/immortality. The second, the physiological, stands for embryo formation and bodily destruction. The third, the social, stands for explicit sexual and social attachment, where love, mundanely tendered, leads to birth, pain and death, instead of the yogi's immortality.

Third, the soul is further confused by the hospitality shown to mourners by its family, and by other persons' failures to display toward it even the common amenities of the good life. As a ghost-like soul, of course, no one is able to hear or see it. Yet it has not yet come to realize that it has "died," and it still remains attached to the major modes of Tibetan social interaction: commensality and conversation.[24] As a disembodied spirit it is harrassed by the remnants of its own corporeal and social attachments, and it is harried by the attitude of others which cause it emotional distress. This is precisely the kind of situation against which funerary texts and the "Book of the Dead" advise. Since the moment of death can afford the final opportunity in one's life for liberation, anything which distracts the consciousness of the dead and involves it in worldly affect can have the most adverse effects upon both the quick and the dead. We shall return to a more detailed analysis later.

In the next "act" of the biographies, the *'das-log*, angered at or disappointed by the acts of its loved ones or acquaintances, takes its leave and is transported willy-nilly to Bardo. Heretofore, the *'das-log* has been receiving sensory, albeit distorted, input from its surrounding environment. From this point on until its recovery sense impressions from the outer world entirely cease and the events that follow are entirely hallucinatory.[25] Bardo is described as a strange and baffling land, and Bardo proper as a city. The *'das-log*, generally in the company of a guide, tours Bardo and gradually begins to establish meaning and order out of its own initial confusion. The *'das-log* witnesses events which are explained to him as basic lessons in the laws of causation and human ethics.

Karma-dbang-'dzin (I A: 38 ff)

I remember thinking (my Guru) Grub-chen Nor-bu-bkra-shis said that at the time of death, this and that vision of the way it is in Bardo would occur. Thinking I had died, I looked to see whether my body had any smell and there was none. Taking some steps up and down, there was no sound of walking. I thought, "Alas, I've definitely died."

While she waits for the *yamas* to seize her, regretting not having done more religious deeds while she lived, a woman dressed in white, carrying a *ḍamaru*, and her hair tied up in back arrives. She takes hold of her by the shoulder and picks her up, saying, "Get up! Do not suffer!

> When affliction occurs, things that counteract it do not come.
> And those that say they have the dharma to do so, speak lies and rough words.
> To be born and to die are man's fortune.
> Birth and death come again and again, and men get them.
> This is not your only death.
> Upon this great path which all must tread.
> I will accompany you. Let us go happily."

Somewhat comforted, Karma-dbang-'dzin follows her and meets an uncle who also tries to set her in the right direction, giving her instructions on the renunciation of hate and jealousy. Arriving at the "plain and city" of Bardo, the *'das-log* makes a final break with her fond memories for the world of men. Remembering her parents, friends and relatives she calls out to them, but receives no answer. The white woman comes and Karma-dbang-'dzin seizes her robe and says, "Elder sister! What is this plain called? Whose great city is that? What is it called? Even though I've parents and many dear friends, relatives and servants, no one advised me whether to go or remain. I arrived here against my will. Now, A-lce, you take my ornaments and please tell me how to return to my own place!" The woman said, "Because you are ignorant and greatly troubled, your own visions arise as your enemy. This plain, which is like the space of heaven, is called the Desert of Razors. It is the path of those great sinners who go to stay in hell. That great city is Klong-thang City, also called Dmar-khams-sgang or the City of the Dead . . ."

Karma-dbang-'dzin tours Bardo and views many people being rewarded for their virtues and punished for their sins. Such encounters are made all the more poignant as she meets persons known to her, hears their pitiful circumstances and takes messages for the living, e.g., (109 ff.) "Then I arrived in the south, and, from a small monastery, out came my own brother (*ming-po*), Tshangs-pa-rgyal-mtshan. I was very sad. I took my brother's hand and cried, "Alas, younger brother! Why

> is it you have had to stay here until now? You were born a lama's son and did not accumulate sins." He said, "Sister, I did not accumulate the sin of desiring wealth, but since my parents and elder brothers held me in small esteem, I did not seek out necessary religious things. Though I am a lama's son, I've no understanding of religion. I was even forced to become a cowherd for cattle that were not mine. I knew nothing special about cowherding, except how to muzzle a calf and a few small skills, and I pretended to be an expert in drawing blood from cattle. I did not know sin and virtue. Having caught small birds and marmots, I roasted them alive. In consequence of that there is a great heap of fire from here to yonder bridge, where the worker demons have taken me against my will . . ."[26]

Generally, the *'das-log* encounters persons both known and unknown to him who recite their names, villages and the history of their crimes. While we have no way of knowing whether these individuals were given their true identities in the biographies, it is certain that they were but loosely disguised, and such a device must have been strikingly effective among those hearing the recitation of the biographies and their "acquaintances" pleas for help. Many plausible sounding names and common shady activities are thus reported: a woman who had been the mistress of a local leader (I, A: 93); a craftsman who makes implements for hunting and warfare (*ibid.*: 144); a merchant who maltreats his pack animals (X, A: 66); a man who is cruel to his serfs (*op. cit.*: 136), and so on. Likewise, others are variously rewarded for their good deeds, even though these might not strike one as being overwhelming, e.g.: two men are saved from punishment because they piously fed a dog (X, A: 78). Still others, we learn, are in Bardo for even more vague and unanticipated reasons. Some suffer not through their own failings, but those of their kinsmen who have neglected the proper funerary arrangements (XVI, A: 171). Even more incomprehensible are those that have been the victims of what appears to be simple bookeeping error. The hell-workers occasionally mistake a name and a family and fetch a soul whose life-span is not yet over. These poor chaps can wait in Bardo for years, contrary to the formal teachings which allow only forty-nine days, because their families have erred and destroyed their corpses (see, e.g., III A: 319; XI: 42–3; XII: 583).[27]

From Bardo, the *'das-log* eventually is taken to the court of the Dharmarāja, before whom he witnesses various "trials," and tours hell.[28] This is generally not a systematic tour of all the hot and cold hells, but sufficient to meet the didactic purpose of the literature. On the other hand, the "trial" scenes before the Dharmarāja tend to be quite extensive, leaving little question of their intent. In the biography of Long-wa A-drung, for example, each case is presented four times: each person, upon being questioned by the Dharmarāja, narrates a catalogue of his sins and virtues; the personal advocates, the god and the ghost who are born together with each individual, then present their cases; the Dharmarāja orders a

check of the statements in the "mirror of deeds" or the scrolls; then the Dharmarāja summarizes the case and passes judgement. Not all cases are simple and straightforward, with sinners receiving punishment and the virtuous reward. Many of the cases ponder the vicissitudes of the strange and contradictory existential situations with which all of us are daily faced. These bring out the sometimes discrepant results of our actions and our intent, and engage the contradictions between those things that we must do to insure worldly success and religious salvation. The following cases may serve as examples:

Karma-dbang-'dzin (I, A: 203 ff.)

> I had a strong desire to practice religion, but my parents made me do worldly things, and I was unable to. Having gone to do worldly work, when I had had two children a terrible disease struck our land. I had not accumulated merit and the two children together with my husband died. For their funerals, I made as much merit as I could, but because my brothers liked having their brides live at home, my first birthplace was cut off, and I had no place to which I could return. They said I was of evil caste and could go wandering. My brothers also listened to evil gossip about me, and I had to wander in other lands. Searching left and right of the southern road, I stayed, and I had nothing to give to achieve virtuous strength. I gave a little service to the Buddha and a bit of charity to beggars. Otherwise, I gave things and did service for *maṇi-pas*. I gave nothing to them for saying the Maṇis, but I took the Maṇi-vows. I had no confidence in my views, but I prayed for a connection to hermits. To male and female preceptors, I established whatever connection I could with each; by giving each a cup of *rtsam-pa*, I asked instruction in meditation from a *maṇi-pa* . . . and asked to do service for those performing rituals and rites of abstinence. Please ask those friends who are making terrible sounds not to send me (to hell) . . ."
>
> The white god confirms her story, and casts a measure of white stones into the scale of justice. The black ghost, however, relates that she was a calamitous mother and wife who killed her children, and had done nothing whatever of virtue. He gives her a half measure of black stones. The monkey-headed demon weighs them and the white stones are found heavier, recommending a good rebirth. The ox-headed demon brings the mirror of deeds and places it before the Dharmarāja, who says, "What you said about doing virtue when you were in the human realm is true . . . What you said about not having sin is untrue. When you were sent as a bride, you already had a bastard child. You feared it would be improper for the wife of a great rich man, and you destroyed it. Isn't killing one's own child a heinous sin . . .? There is no other place for you to go but hell. But because you regretted this and, with your body did obeisances and circumambulations, with your speech

always said the six syllables and many verses of confession before *maṇi-pas*, and felt regret in your mind, the sin has been purified. Further, you worshipped the Buddha and asked for services from the clergy. You thought there was no difference in size between the services you requested and those requested by rich people, but that rich people sit in a higher position and were given nice things. You had to sit below them without a cushion, and except for a little, were given no food or things. You thought they paid no attention to the services' size, and were only thinking of being rude and the quality of their appearance. Because your mind was thus engaged from the start, you erased the good you did. Otherwise, you will attain human form, but for now, because you did services with the sin of your mind's having been otherwise engaged, you will take rebirth as a vulture. Then you will attain human form . . .

Gling-bza' Chos-skyid (III, A: 375 ff.)

A well-dressed, pretty woman says, "I am a princess of Dmar-gung. Today I was going from my home to my parents', and crossing a stream on the way, I fell and arrived here . . . When many lamas and teachers came I asked for teachings and blessings. I wanted to go and offer food (*zas-'brel*), but I was afraid that people would say I was not acting like a nobleman's daughter and that I was uneducated and sluttish; so I did not go. I heard a sermon (*khrid*) from Lama Gzhon-nu-rgyal-mtshan and he asked me to be his *yum*. He was counting on me, but I thought, "This kind of mendicant lama has asked *me* such a thing!" and I did not stay to complete the lessons. I did not have faith. Because of my youth, I did not know how to complete virtue. Now, O Dharmarāja. I will give you my turquoise and corals and ask you to send me back. I have the intention to do religion. If you don't send me back, I'll have sinned. Please don't send me to the chaos below."

Checking her story, the Dharmarāja tells her, ". . . Aside from your having one-quarter of the sin for the animals killed at your wedding, the Lama Gzhon-nu-rgyal-mtshan was one who had meditated on the goal of the *rdzogs-chen* and had perceived the essence of mind-itself. Working for the salvation of beings, he came to hell last month and saved more than a thousand beings. This kind of lama is good; you went to request teachings from him and he asked you to be his secret *yum*. You thought you were a daughter of good parentage, and that a mere mendicant had asked you such a thing. Thus you had perverse faith. You left off asking for teachings and told your confidantes. The girl Chos-sgron said, "Because he understands that apparent dharmas are false, it is not all right for you to talk like this. When that lama died, omens and relics came forth, a rainbow filled the sky, and there were

> many auspicious omens. I thought he'd liberate you, (but he did not) and now you'll have retribution for your perverse faith." You said to your acquaintances that they had no reason to go to him, that they need not go out of faith. To your confidantes you said rough words. Having had perverse faith towards the lama, you told many people and they had perverse faith towards him. These people have performed a deed worthy of going to a bad rebirth. In that land, you harmed the lama's conversions. It is greater sin to blaspheme against lamas and teachers than to kill a thousand beings—humans, horses and dogs"

In a singular incident, we learn that even normally mute animals can protest against one in hell:

Byang-chub-sengge (X, A: 196 ff.)

> Then before the Dharmarāja an old man and a frog arrived. The frog said, "O Dharmarāja, hear me! Having awakened the thought of enlightenment I was performing *samādhi* before a temple. This old man came along and killed me. Punish him!" The old man said, " . . . I, having awakened the thought of enlightenment, was circumambulating the temple. I didn't know the frog was beneath the stones. Had I known, I'd never have killed him. I don't deserve to be punished." Going through their routines, the Dharmarāja and his court determine that neither the frog nor the old man are morally responsible and that they will both have good rebirths.

In some cases, we learn that even the most trivial of acts can result either in hellish suffering or its reduction. Chos-dbang-rgyal-mo reports the case of a woman who forbore throwing a rock at a dog because it broke a vessel. In hell she is trapped under a rock for hitting the dog, but the lip of the rock's overhang does not quite reach her head, because of her forbearance. Further, she is supplied with food, because she fed the dog (IV: f. 13b.) In the same work we learn of an otherwise virtuous doctor who must spend one day in hell, since during the course of his doctoring he burnt the "precious human body" (*ibid.:* f. 16a). In other cases, we learn of the terrible fate of such notorious characters as Tsa-phu-ba's concubine, the poisoner of Mi-la-ras-pa (X, A: 125 ff,).[29]

We shall not dwell upon the *'das-log's* tour of hell and its various reaches, where we learn through the gory and ingeneous tortures that await hapless sinners that punishment will fit the crime with an unmistakable elegance. Perhaps more interesting are other features which tell of ways to escape such a fate. All of the biographies contain scenes, such as the one above, in which a seemingly doomed sinner escapes an apparently well-deserved fate because of a forgotten connection with a lama, or a seemingly virtuous person anticipating a reward conveniently forgets a sin which dooms him (see, e.g., I, B: 190 ff.). In

contrast to the mechanistic image of the scales of justice loaded with black and white stones or the inexorable calculations in the mirror of deeds, we begin to realize that karmic justice is not simply a matter of mechanics. Precise though karma's laws are, the vector of human ethical activity through a life course is so complex that final judgements are relative affairs, that any little thing, good or bad, can color an entire life.

As we would expect in literature connected with the Avalokiteśvara cult, a primary construct in the ordering of an organic view of human fate is the notion of compassion. As Avalokiteśvara was inspired to turn hell into a garden spot (*Za ma tog*: 323), so in all biographies do saints appear and rescue errant souls.

Gling-bza' Chos-skyid (III A: 348 ff.)

> The *Maṇi-pa* Jo-chung Smra-ba'i-sengge comes to hell and calls out those who are connected with him. One after another, the gates of hell opened. The *yamas'* weapons all fell to the ground, and they prostrated themselves. Next, inconceivable numbers of men and women from hither and yon heard him call and said, "He is my lama! He is my lama!" and all came running after him. Thereupon, the *yamas* arose and looking over their shoulders, said, "Some of you may go, but what have you others done to go?" So saying, they caught about three hundred men and women with hooks and dragged them back and forth to where they belonged. Of the people who went up most were women and only a few men. Of those that went down most were men and only a few women . . . Then I asked the Dharmarāja, "The pandit lead so many men and women away, and they did not have to undergo any division of their sin and virtue at all. These ones who were called escaped the strict law. Given there are people with such an ability as this, why is it that the ones who were brought down where not sent up? Why amongest those that returned down were there more men and fewer women?" Dharmarāja said, "That pandit was the *Maṇi-pa* Jo-chung Smra-ba'i-sengge. He has had faith in Mahākāruṇika since he was small, and has revered the . . . six syllables from his youth. Further, he has preached it in all kingdoms. Those that he has led away revere him with body, speech and mind, being connected to him through audiences, hearing in him preach, having given him food and receiving prayers. Through his mercy he leads those who received his blessings. Aside from him, others here who do not know virtue and sin have no place on the path of liberation. Those that were brought down mostly had no connection with him at all. Some did have one, but had deep-seated perverse faith. Had they not had perverse faith, they would have gone up, but they did not control their arrogance and have purchased sin alone. The men who returned back took a haughty view, thinking they were real men. They forgot they had to die. Thinking they were superior, they had no faith in

> lamas, nor did they ask for things in accord with the doctrine. They did not exhort others to do *Maṇis*. When their wives and daughters wished to give things to lamas, go and ask for teachings and say *Maṇis*, they became avaricious about their wealth. They are not persons who had faith or were continually mindful of death. They beat their wives and daughters, saying, "What do you mean by taking whatever is sweet, delicious and nourishing to pandits?" They are men who said such evil words as "They say that lamas cheat merchants." Now they must suffer. The men that went up did not do things like that. They had faith, gave gifts, served the clergy and requested teachings. At home they did not beat their daughters and family. They collected merit which benefitted them at death. The women that went up had faith in all lamas. They gave proper gifts and services. In all their births, they will go up. They have taken Mahākarūṇika as their tutelary. They say Maṇis to benefit the beings of the six realms. Exhorting others to say them too, they benefit greatly. Those that do so are few. Persons who make reverential petitions to Ārya-Mahākarūṇika have these several connections, but such ones are few."[30]

Finally, we are exhorted by the Dharmarāja himself to mend our ways. After their tour of hell, the *'das-logs* invariably find themselves as defendants in Dharmarāja's court. Generally, it is discovered that an error has been made regarding the *'das-log's* identity, and that he has some time left to live. Other biographies use considerably more complicated devices.

Karma-dbang-'dzin (I, A: 333 ff.)

> After her *ḍākinī*-companion suggests to the Dharmarāja that she be sent back to the world of men, the Dharmarāja checks the mirror of deeds and discovers no such error has occured. He says, "Have you watched carefully the calculation of good and bad deeds? Have you seen as well the terror of death's messengers? Have you understood the tidings and the dispositions of virtue and sin? Do you know that I am Dharmaraja? Previously, Gling-bza' Chos-skyid returned from death, because a mistake was made concerning her name and family. A woman from Dartsendo named Bsam-btan, a woman of Bonpo lineage from Khams named G. yung-drung-dbang-mo, and you return, no such mistake having been made. The reason for the Dartsendo woman's return was this: I told her, "You have turned your mind to making a profit in trade and in worldly deeds, but unless you practice dharma with good intentions, you will not become enlightened. Do not mix virtue and sin!" and I sent her back. The Bonpo woman from Khams returned for this reason: Because Bon does not have the fruits of enlightenment, having entered the gate of the Buddhist doctrine, I let her return for the

purpose of the necessity of examining the essence of the Mahāmudrā. Now you too exhort the people of the world to virtue and take my message of the interval between life and death! The reason is this: In a former life you met Rdo-rje-phag-mo. Because you obtained all her initiations and oral precepts the breath of the *ḍākiṇī* has not disappeared for seven human generations. Since you have the ability to work for the purpose of beings you have been put in the world as a guide on the path of liberation ... You were born in a previous life as a clairvoyent elephant in India. After that birth, you were reborn a woman in Lho-brag Kho-thing. From the time you were small your parents took you and you did obeisances and circumambulations at various temples. You offered butter lamps and food, and said many prayers. Then Sna-n-g-rste-ba, a prophet holding the lineage of Padmasambhava came, and you asked for his compassion. The prophet gave you many vows such as the *dam-rdzas myong-grol* and the *gu-ru'i byang-sems dkar-dmar*. He prayed for a long time, saying, may you be one who is able to show the bodhisattva path in later life, and be able to admonish all beings to give up their ignorance and do virtue ..." Because of the ability of his power, which perfects, having been born later of good caste and with a clear mind, you will be one of the eight classes of Avalokita's incarnations, a gate to kindness and compassion for all beings, one who never ceases to say the six syllables, and one, being immovable in your enlightened mind, who is inseparable from protecting tutelary deities. Then because of the benefits of the power of your previous prayers and virtues, you will return to your body in the human realm and you shall perfectly achieve working for the benefit of beings ..."

In Byang-chub-sengge's case, his guide is 'Jig-rten-dbang-phyug himself, in the form of an eight-year-old boy, who requests the *'das-log's* return to the living, telling the Dharmarāja that Byang-chub-sengge is part of his retinue (X A: 242).

The *'das-log* is then treated to a lengthy message by the Dharmarāja to enjoin mankind to change its ways, containing lists of do's and don't's.

Bya-bral Kun-dga'-rang-grol (IX B: f. 35b ff.)

Also, give this message to famous lamas! A holy lama is one who protects beings. He spins the wheel of the holy dharma without wandering in saṁsarā. Try to be a perfect leader of beings. Don't be a lama only in form. Be perfectly pure and meaningful. Augment the Buddha's doctrine without contention. Those who prepare themselves to assemble many beings as their disciples (for fame and profit) plant for themselves and others the seeds of suffering in hell. Such lamas as the first kind need not be ashamed before me.

Give this message to the great men that protect the earth! Enforce

the wall of the secular and temporal laws that support the doctrine of Śākyamuni. Those who guard the borders of Lhasa and Bsam-yas, worship and restore them. Practice severally and successively helpful doctrines such as not hunting or fishing, the *Bka'-'gyur*, the *Bstan-'gyur*, the *Sabcu, bum-pa, khro-rol*, and *gtor-bzlog*. Always be kind and compassionate to your subjects. Annihilate enemies that would destroy the doctrine. You may come shamelessly before me . . .

Give this message to lay officials! Through the power of the merit of charity, carry on the crown of your head the king's commands. Carry out his commands evenhandedly. Administer the law honestly, without looking for silver and golden wealth. Protect the subjects with love and compassion, without distinguishing the wise from the stupid. Do not hand out gratuitous punishment that transgresses the law; it is a cause for falling to hell. Those officials that pulverize the subjects and practice ill usages that destroy the doctrine, try not to be ashamed when you come before me . . .

Give this message to meditation masters! Think on the impermanence of this rarely attained human life. Respect lamas and offer the maṇḍala of the refuge-mind. Cultivate the *bdag-skyed* and *mdun-bskyed* of *guruyoga*. If you obtain good results, you cut off completely the root of the three doubts. If you look at them exteriorly, they are meditation masters; if interiorly, they are like wolves. Such meditation masters as the first kind do not need to be ashamed when they come before me. . .

Give this message to *dge-bshes*! Depending on your friends in the dharma who have perfections, practice wisdom, the sūtras, mantras and lineage transmissions. Keep your vows perfectly to practice and perfect the vows of the novice, such as the gradual acquisition of the seven noble jewels for your wealth. If you look exteriorly, they are *dge-bshes*; if you look at them interiorly they are sinful merchants. Such *dge-bshes* as the first kind need not be ashamed when they come before me . . .

Give this message to nuns! Do not lust for saṁsāra and give up worldly deeds. Keep your vows and renounce beer that makes you careless. Renounce the fetters of a householder's work and apply yourselves to religion. Rely on famous lamas that you see. Apply yourselves to holy deeds and virtues. Don't shuttle back and forth, up to the mountains and down to the valleys. Do not cause others to have bodily sins, talk nonsense or have evil ideas. If you look at them exteriorly, they are nuns; if interiorly, they are really whores. Such nuns as the first kind need not be ashamed when they come before me.

Give this message to the *maṇi-pas* of the world! First, ask instruction from teachers, disciples and lamas. Then turn the kingdom to the dharma. Those who tell of Sbyin-la-dga', Gzugs-kyi-nyi-ma, Snang-sa, the royal histories and the Buddha's deeds; those that tell the biographies of Sgomchung Karma-dbang-'dzin, Padma, Bstan-'dzin-chos-

> sgron and Glingbza' Chos-skyid's messages, do not exaggerate what is in them. Say *Maṇis* with your body, speech and mind. Although you explain karma to others, if you don't calculate your own, knowing that, it is sinful. If you look at them exteriorly, they are *maṇi-pas*; if interiorly, they are like parrots. The first kind of *maṇi-pa* need not be ashamed when he comes before me.
>
> Give this message to mantrists! Although you dwell in the gate of the profound mantric dharma, practice lama, tutelary and *ḍākiṇī*. Always renounce evil intentions, sending curses, black magic. Do not let enemies of the doctrine harm the object of the ten virtues, but liberate their consciousnesses to the dharma-sphere. Do not do harmful deeds, either rough or soft, but practice mantras. Send thread-crosses against demons (*sri-gnon*). Apply yourselves to virtue, putting an end to the work of harmful demons ... Do not establish lineages, but take *upāsaka's* vows. For those who practice hellish deeds, for those mantrists who cultivate curses, magic and evil thoughts, try not to be ashamed when you come before me.
>
> Give this message to laymen! Respect your parents, give supporting gifts of food and drink to elders and servants. Even though you do not practice divine religion, keep your intentions perfectly pure. Don't beat your animals, but protect them as if they were your sons. Apply yourselves to virtue and give up theft, robbery and hunting. If you look at them exteriorly, they are laymen; if interiorly, they are like cannibal-demons (*srin-po*) . . .
>
> Give this message to women! Women, the increasers of worldly life and being, give service to the Three Gems and give charity to the poor and the blind. Give generous hospitality to your guests. Revere your husband with a good heart. Since a bad husband will take retribution, be kind. Don't let your cattle starve, take care of them. If you look at them exteriorly, they are women; if interiorly, they are witches. Such woman as the first kind need not be ashamed when they come before me.
>
> Give this message to beggars! Not having perfectly done charity in your former lives, you're now poor and indigent. Say *Maṇis* nicely. Renounce theft, robbery, hunting and killing. Try to beg and live in whichever place is best. Do not say bad and deprecatory things or gossip. If you look at them exteriorly, they are beggars; if interiorly, they are rich thieves and bandits. Such beggars as the first kind need not be ashamed when they come before me.

In Byang-chub-sengge's biography, we find the most systematic presentation, as the *'das-log* went on to propound a special system for the worship of Avalokiteśvara through the use of votary flags which appears to have gained some fame in Eastern Tibet. The biography includes the causes of death, the

ways to avoid bad rebirths and the paths to Buddhahood, the benefits of saying the *Maṇi*, the strength of virtue and Mahākarūṇika's compassion, the manner and times for offering *jo-dar*, a typology of virtues that do not benefit and sins that do not harm, and so forth (X, A: 215 ff.).

These messages often conclude with the Dharmarāja's prophecy concerning the fate of the *'das-log*, who then instantly finds himself at the scene of the corpse once more. The body is then reoccupied with as much confusion and loathing as it took to leave it. The quickening of what was considered a corpse produces, it can be sure, a certain wariness on the part of of the watchers. Usually a lama must be called in to confirm the adventures of the *'das-log* as authentic, in order to insure that a dangerous spirit has not taken control of the corpse. Still, the *'das-log* sometimes reports that others are loathe to accept them and their stories. Though they know their own experiences to be genuine, and the teachings of Buddhism to be true, the world is still the world despite their temporary absence from it, and the onus of responsibility now falls on them to change it.

Karma-dbang-'dzin (I, B: 296 ff.)

> When I thought of going inside, there was the corpse of a white-muzzled dog with foam on its mouth. A feeling of fear and nausea came over me and I ran back a few steps. Again, after thinking about it, I felt I could approach it. Getting used to the dog's corpse, I went there, and as soon as I'd done so, my mind entered my body. Again, my recollections were scattered, as if there were a small darkening. Then I recovered my memory a bit, my body moved a little, and the monk sitting wake said 'Phat' three times. When I thought of my suffering in hell, my palms shot upwards and made the curtain covering my face sway. The monk thought, "Is this not a zombie (*ro-langs*) possessed by a powerful *rgyal-po*-demon, who wants to do harm?" He pushed the curtain aside and forced my head down again and again. Then he thrust his hand inside my bosom to see whether there was any warmth or not. I thought I must tell him I was not dead and should grasp his hand, but during the seven days my body and soul had separated, my tongue had swollen. The monk was firm and not afraid, and again he checked to see whether my body had any warmth. My chest was warm and he called the names of my family, saying, "Madame has returned! Everyone come here!" Then my mother-in-law came and said "Has mother's girl returned?" with tears coming from her eyes. She tore the threads of the hide blanket in which I'd been sewn with her teeth. Old Sde-pa (her father-in-law) moved me to another room, and they gave me a mixture of raw sugar boiled with honey. But because my mind and body had been separated for seven days, my throat was dry and I couldn't drink, so had to be fed by spoon. On the next day, I gradually got some

> strength. To all the people they told the good news that I'd returned and all became faithful and pious. Then I wished to go abroad and deliver Dharmarāja's message, but a few persons spread hateful gossip about me, saying I was of evil caste and, having left my body for seven days, my mind had gone to Central Tibet to gather peoples' breath, and that now I'd come back. All the others listened to that talk. Some said, "If that's the case, she's indeed a witch," and the country was filled with such gossip. Then the elder Sde-pa said it was like the expression 'Instead of the fame of circumambulating Rtsa-ri, one gets the gossip of having stolen Mgon-po's yak', and that I should stay awhile and keep my experiences secret.
>
> One day Khra-phu dpon-slob Rje Rinpoche comes and Karma-dbang-'dzin asks for teachings. Thereupon a servant of hers says that the teaching should be easy for her inasmuch as she had gone to the land of the dead and returned. The lama says that he has had the same experience three times and they compare notes. Karma-dbang-'dzin tells him the entire story and gradually people gather around to listen. They see the lama cry. He decides to postpone his teachings and asks her to tell her story and deliver the messages from the dead. Offering her a horse, mule and a servant to accompany her, he then requests that she travel far and wide to work for the salvation of beings, saying that she will have more disciples than himself and praying for her enlightenment.

As a motif in the literature of popular religion, the spiritual journey is often connected to the attainment of special powers, charisma, or used as a metaphor for spiritual growth and development. In traditional Tibetan culture, the ability to "travel" to another realm or time, invisible or inaccessible to other men, is also a source of sacred authority and is among the constituent factors of building personal charisma. Other sources of charisma in Tibet—both *Amtcharisma*, as in the case of high ecclesiastical officials, and *Gentilcharisma*, as in the case of membership in a reincarnation or teaching lineage—are often modified by the "personalities" which fill these institutional slots. Personal achievement, measured by such things as scholastic or mystical skill, adds weight to the legitimacy of the occupant of such positions. The criterion of "travelling" is shared by several charismatic specialists in Tibet. Curiously, it is not necessary as a major component in the background or personality of the archexample of personal charisma, the lama. By virtue of the fact that they are worldly manifestations of the unconditioned or noetic, lamas are charismatic by ascription. No other being can bestow or transmit to others divine blessings, which are thought to confer upon the recipient salvation, good health and other desiderata. In the words of one savant, lamas are the symbol of all good things:

> The lama is that very self that aggregates all the Buddhas of the three times. His body is the monkhood, his speech the pure law, his mind the

> true nature of the Buddha; the lama aggregates these three things. His body is the lama, his speech the tutelary, his mind the *ḍākiṇī*; he aggregates all the three veins. His body is the incarnate form, his speech the fruitional form, his mind the dharma form; he aggregates all three forms. He is the incarnation of all past Buddhas, the source of all future Buddhas, the representative of all present Buddhas.
>
> (Dpal-sprul 1971: 8–9)

The lama stands for simultaneity and contiguity of sacred time and space. All the dimensions collapse into a single figure alone But these qualities can be "unpacked," at least in part, and other figures can attain at least partial charismatic status by achieving spatio-temporal control of the sacred environment. By comparing four such figures—the saint, the enstatic mystic, the shaman and the oracle—with the *'das-log* we may be able to gain in insight into the structure and history of charisma in Tibetan religion.

There are no firm distinctions between the first two named here. There are, quite simply, no living saints (*siddhas*); mystics are expected, in the broad sense, to become saints. Once this status is achieved, the saint is able to travel physically to other worlds by *ṛddhi*, like Maudgalyāyana or any of the other *arhants*. Normal corporeal or physical restrictions do not apply to them, and the traditional marks of saintliness emphasize this quite plainly: the ability to float on water, to go beneath the earth, to emenate other forms, etc.

The enstatic mystic, through meditative skill, may also "send" his mind to other realms and times, recalling the past and predicting the future. While not yet a saint, he controls his mind to the point where time and space may be overcome. Some compare this ability to the daydream; no mental element necessarily leaves the soma, but somehow the visions received or engendered in this process are viridical. The biographies of enstatic mystics are filled with their visions of hell, heaven, things to come and so forth. This ability is also a major component in religious innovation. Prophets, for instance, typically regard unique visions (*dgong-gter*) as legitimation to inititate and spread new doctrines or ritual.

In the case of shamans and oracles, there are numerous references in archaic Tibetan records to specialists that travel to other worlds, riding upon rainbows, sunbeams, drums and other odd vehicles, to battle with malign or illness-causing demons, rescue souls, find out the future and so on. These practices are fully consistent with the so-called classical shamanism of northern Asia. For the most part, this kind of shaman has disappeared from modern Tibet, but they are found occasionally among the peoples of Tibet's ethnic fringes. Most modern Tibetan oracles are possessed by supernaturals. They do not send their minds or bodies anywhere, but rather act as a corporeal vessel for a possessing deity.

If we compare *'das-log* with these other specialists, they may be seen to occupy an intermediate category. With regard to the oracle and the *'das-log*, the oracle generally (1) has an early possession experience, which he must somehow

learn how to control. After a period of training, the supernatural is consciously invoked to take possession. (2) Possession by a supernatural is believed to lead to the displacement of the oracle's own powers of perception and mentition. He "lends" his body and voice to the supernatural. (3) Departure of the deity is followed by a return to somatic and mental normalcy.

In the case of the *'das-log* (1) the departure of the soul is entirely involuntary and unconscious. (2) Instead of gaining a "god's mind" in an empty body in this world, the *'das-log* acquires a "spirit-body" (*yid-kyi lus*) for his soul, which is then conducted through the underworld. (3) His own soul is reintegrated with his body. Instead of his usual status, he has acquired a new one. The *'das-log* resembles the archaic shaman in the matters of how the soul travels out of the body, the initiatory "illness," and in several other ways. In this regard his experience is opposed to that of the enstatic mystic and to the penetration of the oracle by a supernatural. While the mystic, the saint and the oracle (at least in the post-initial phase) all possess voluntary control over the onset of their visionary experiences, in the case of the *'das-log* the action is involuntary only. While others may repeat their experiences, there is absolutely no evidence in the biographies to show that whatever happens to the *'das-log* happens more than once in their lifetimes. At the same time, the *'das-log* resembles the Buddhist saint to a certain extent, but, again, the latter's actions are voluntary and they travel bodily.

In this set of oppositions, the *'das-log*, vis-a-vis saints, oracles, shamans and mystics, occupies an intermediate position in a hierarchy of charismatic religious specialists. Oracles, as opposed to mystics and the rest, are not highly regarded in this hierarchy, and shamans are not only confined to the fringes of ethnic Tibet ethnographically, but are regarded historically by Tibetans as representing a stage of religious development surpassed and supplanted by, and morally inferior to, Buddhism. This hierarchy is based on two factors: sacred power and relative purity (see Tambiah, 1970). In the first instance, we must ask what powers are there that the charismatic taps into. In the second, the question becomes what intentions are involved in the tapping of this power and how it is transmuted. The oracle and shaman deal only with what Tibetans believe are low-order supernaturals. Purity of intentions and high degrees of mental self-control are only minimally involved. Their intentions are to treat and cure this-worldly ills and problems. The saint and mystic, on the other hand, are heroes that undertake the rigors of well-intentioned meditations and moreover succeed at them. These are clearly directed at other-worldly goals. The *'das-log's* career begins as an involuntary act and ends in full-fledged Buddhist commitment. A further parallel may be discerned in the relationship between possession and non-possession shamanism and Buddhism and shamanism. Most possession states (as in the modern Tibetan oracle), and, as Babb (1982) reminds us, karma are amnestic; the possessed oracle cannot recall his deeds during his possession state, nor can one know his past deeds other than by their fruition. The archaic shaman thus presents a handier model for the *'das-log* inasmuch as they

experience nonamnestic dissociational states which merge into categories of Buddhist saintliness where various aspects of time and space can be known and recalled.

Finally, as a historical phenomenon, it is interesting that there seems to be a correspondence between where the *'das-log* and the archaic shaman flourish. Both the biographical and the ethnographic evidence point to Tibet's outlying areas, which included a higher percentage of semicivilized (non-Buddhist) shamanist-animist peoples than in Central Tibet. Shamanism deals principally with low-order spirits, which symbolize the *ad hoc* social and environmental dangers which humans face. When, say, sickness strikes, or when one loses his soul to a spirit, a shaman may find the offending demon, drive it away from his client, or bargain with it for the return of the soul. However, the moral framework in which such transactions take place is exceedingly narrow and is based upon exchange, ransom, and threat. Buddhism aspires to a loftier view, which is based upon a more abstract notion of how the world and human nature operate. World relationships are based upon the systematic operations of karma; sickness and soul-loss are ultimately not the results of *ad hoc* encounters with demons, rather they occur as the result of the karmic intersection of victim and persecutor, whose origin lies in moral debts that must be paid. And humans, while imbued with the creative potential of Buddha-nature, are more likely to fail in their realization of it, because they too easily fall prey to their own ignorance, attachment and hatred. As the *'das-log* texts continually remind us, all those scary things which appear in Bardo and hell are appearances of our own minds, and we have but to recognize our own ultimate nature to be free of them. The *'das-log's* task then is clear; he must transform both the experience and the moral framework of shamanism into a Buddhist view of things.[31]

From a psychological point of view, the *'das-log's* experience is patently a shaman's initiatory "illness," displaying the classical symptoms of a dissociative state: trance, oneiroid or hallucinatory phenomena, paramnesia and so on. We use the word "illness" here with caution, since in recent "anthropological and psychological literature, the pathological bias towards dissociation has been lifted. For example, West (1967: 890) writes that dissociation is not necessarily to be considered psychopathological ... Bourguignon (1965) emphasizes the healing aspects of dissociation (writing of) "dissociation in the service of the self" (1965: 55). It is linked to Kris' (1952: 60) formulation of "regression in the service of the ego," i.e., a regressive experience which then leads to artistic inspiration and creative integration, "which" can be cathartic and give relief and expression to repressed thoughts, feelings and desires, as well as provide alternative roles which satisfy individual needs." (Peters and Price-Williams 1980: 402).[32] West (1967: 889) also remarks that a dissociated state is a defence of ego against material perceived as dangerous on either a conscious or unconscious level: "maturational shortcomings, emotional conflicts, and stressful life situation are then superimposed upon each other to create a trap or impasse that cannot be resolved by the patient because of overwhelming anxiety inherent in

the available possible solutions ... Generally speaking ... the premorbid personality ... will reveal emotional immaturity, self-centeredness, an historical likelihood of episodic emotional disturbances in childhood or adolescence, and a remarkable lack of solidly gratifying or naturally supportive interpersonal relationships." Similarly, Laughlin (1967: 741) remarks that dissociation "applies especially to the vicissitudes of interpersonal relationships" especially in early life and that it "follows the lines of infantile and childhood regressions."

If these notions are to be useful in understanding the *'das-log* literature we must explore them a bit further: what is the *'das-log's* problem with regard to attaining maturity and gratifying relationships? and how does a regressive experience help to attain what has otherwise been a failure? To get at these questions will require us first to examine the notion of ambivalence, both in Buddhist soteriology and in psychology.

As we have already said, the *'das-log* are connected with the worship of Avalokiteśvara. In a prayer to the bodhisattva we learn what happen when one recites his mantra:

> The white Oṁ radiates to the land of the gods.
> It cleanses their proud character and the suffering of falling ...
>
> The green Ma radiates to the land of the *asura*.
> It cleanses their jealous character and the suffering of fighting ...
>
> The yellow Ni radiates to the land of humans.
> It cleanses their ambivalent (*the-tshom*) character and the suffering of worry and indigence ...
>
> The azure Pad radiates to the land of the animals.
> It cleanses their ignorant character and the suffering of stupidity ...
>
> The red Me radiates to the land of the *pretas*.
> It cleanses their lustful character and the suffering of hunger and thirst ...
>
> The dark blue Hūṁ radiates to the land of hell.
> It cleanses their hateful character and the suffering of hot and cold ...
>
> (Tshul-khrims-bzang-po, ff. 3b–4b; see also Lauf 1977: 125)

The literature of this cult, then, proposes that as the constitutive or characterological flaw of gods is pride, of titans jealousy, of animals ignorance, of *pretas* craving, and of hellish beings hate, the basic human flaw is doubt or ambivalence. Buddhist texts proclaim that all existence is suffering. To become attached to what is after all an illusion is spiritual suicide. Men are torn between their desire for worldly good and comfort and their more noble spiritual nature. Doubt or ambivalence about where their true goals lie keeps them forever in a state of suffering. The way to resolve this is to pick out the basic fly in the

dispositional ointment and, at least, follow the moral precepts of the cult to escape the endless weary round of existence. As Obeyesekere has remarked (1981: 35) there is a basic conflict in Buddhist societies between eros and agape, involvement in the goods of personal family ties and sex versus devotionalism in the service of all mankind. This comment is particularly apt in terms of the material we are examining here because Avalokiteśvara is the embodiment of universal love. Ambivalence, as a baseline, universal, phylogenetic flaw in the human psyche reflects the tension between eros and agape.

In psychology, the term ambivalence is used in its most general sense as the simultaneous existence of contradictory tendencies, beliefs or affects in ego's relationship toward an object. Ambivalence is first exhibited as a phase of normal psychological birth, between the stages of normal symbiosis and the stage when Oedipal conflict has been resolved. It is the late stages of separation and individuation, especially the rapprochement crisis, that are ambivalence-ridden. As children learn to become themselves, to disengage themselves from their objects of primary identification and engage the rest of the world as individuals in their own right, they experience an awareness of separation and a concurrent fear of the loss of the good object with whom they are still primitively identified. Their behavior is characterized by marked separation anxiety in which they wish for reunion with the love object and simultaneously fear engulfment by it. Often this period is marked by increased aggression and splitting of the object into good and bad parts. This stage of development is conflict filled; one's awareness as an individuating entity increases the need for object's love. This in turn increases a fear of an unsatisfactory return to a state no longer useful to the growing individuality of the child, and it continues until a positive maternal image is internalized (Mahler, et al. 1975).

It might also behoove us to take into account the notions of David Bakan (1966) who fuses our two interests in religion and psychology. For Bakan, man begins in a state of undifferentiated, self-satisfied, omnipotent, narcissistic bliss. This is followed by a stage of separation (agency). The agentic is necessary to the development of a functioning ego whose aim is mastery of the world. The ego, however, is terminal: one cannot separate forever, and a recognition of one's separation is also a recognition of one's mortality. Further, as the agentic reaches its limit and eventually, as it must, comes to despair, problematic introjects are expelled or projected outwards as other phenomenal objects which then threaten ego as the demonic. The *'das-log* literature explicitly recognizes this when it tells us that all the threatening forms, shapes, lights, sounds, etc., in Bardo and hell are our own. Mature separation ends and the bliss of primary narcissism is restored by what Bakan calls communion. By giving over his mastery voluntarily, by substituting for it understanding, and by reconciliation of the parts engendered in separation, we become whole again, as mature beings in a wider community of order of both the nomothetic and the cosmological.

The *'das-log's* problem is precisely a struggle to attain this maturity. To begin with; the "dying" process, both in Western and Tibetan terms, is highly

ambivalent. Shneidman (1973) has observed a "complicated clustering of intellectual and affective states" with marked alternating mood swings in dying patients. The Tibetan tradition, of course, postulates that the processes and visions presenting at the time of death have dual meanings, whose interpretation may lead either to rebirth or salvation. In the pre-trance state, the *'das-log's* report that they are torn between conflicting desires: hunger and nausea, wishing to arise from their beds and immediately feeling like lying down again, wishing for companionship but being unable to communicate, and so on.

Perhaps more important are the statements that we can garner concerning the *'das-log's* affective states. Several remark that although they had been inclined to follow a religious life, they were frustrated through the demands of their parents, etc., who wished them to marry. Byang-chub-sengge quite explicitly names doubt over the veridicality of a vision as the cause of his illness (X, A: 53). He plainly has failed to achieve the mature communion of meditative success. Regarding the story of others we can only hazard a guess. Long-wa A-drung provides us with no direct evidence, but in the interval between his lingering at home and Bardo we note that his sister calls him "elder brother" (XVI, A: 156 ff.), yet she is living at home with an adoptive bridegroom (*mag-pa*) who usurps A-drung's place at table. We can only note the ethnographic peculiarity of this living arrangement and ponder why this young man of twenty-five has not married and taken his place at the head of his household, i.e., failed to achieve a mature social role. This theme—the failure to achieve social or religious maturity—is also supplemented by reports of undergoing early emotional distress and disillusionment with the world in related literature. The famous female incarnate, the last Shug-gseb Rje-btsun Rinpoche, reports that she also underwent a *'das-log* experience. She remarks that although her relationship to her mother was good—like being in the womb (p. 31), her father was a dissolute drunkard, whose cruelty to the mother and herself caused them to be continually uprooted, in debt and other sorts of trouble (29 ff.). These incidents were followed usually by family reconciliations, again providing us with a general backdrop of psychosocial ambivalence. It is also significant that Rje-btsun Rinpoche was familiar with several *'das-log* stories, including A-drung's, which she learned from the Royal Chaplain of Ladakh, Bkra-shis-rnam-rgyal, who also preached the *Maṇi* to her and her family (p. 45 ff.).

The most informative set of circumstances, however, comes from the biography of Karma-dbang-'dzin. As her soul lingers, invisible and unheeded, in the company of her husband and the friends who try to comfort him, she comes to understand the duplicity of men and the treachery of attachment to them. She successively hears some neighbors' nasty gossip about her; sees a servant who is supposed to preparė tea for the mourners filch some for himself; hears a family steward in a misbegotten attempt to sooth her husband say she was an undutiful wife. She begs for food and drink, but ignored by her husband and the company, who are seeming to make merry, she lays bare the sources of her ambivalance and reveals the systematic stresses to which Tibetan womanhood is subject.

Karma-dbang-'dzin (I, A: 20–38; B: 12–25)

(Having arrived at 'Og-gro) I heard great lamentations. Sde-pa-drung (her husband) and all the menfolk had gone to Phra-phug and were not there. The maids were calling my name and weeping. I thought, "I haven't died. Did Sde-pa-drung scold them?" I took one of the maids by the shoulder and lifted her up, asking if he had scolded them, but she didn't respond and acted as though she'd not seen me.

Outside there were also the indistinct sounds of wailing and I looked out. Some people were saying I'd died. Some said they wept, because I'd been humble and took care of others. Others said I was jealous and spiteful and they said many other nasty things behind my back. I was smitten, and looking those who were not crying in the face, tears came to my eyes. But pretending not to notice them and to hold back the tears, I went back in and cried my eyes out. Some said, "She's died. What a pity!" Others said, "Poor Sde-pa-drung!" and because they cried, it rained hailstones of pus and blood the size of eggs. I suffered as though my bones had been broken and my skin pierced through. A great roaring sound also occurred. I looked at my body and I was wearing the same clothes as before. As soon as the hail fell my body became naked. There arose great lamentations of intolerable suffering.

An indistinct disembodied voice said to me, "Go to Phra-phug!" and there-upon, as soon as the thought of going had flashed into my mind, I arrived there. Sde-pa, master and servants, had already arrived. A full vessel of beer had been placed before them, tea was on the stove and two monks arranged food before an image. They were preparing an offering. I thought, "I didn't know someone died. Is this a seventh-day offering?" People from the village gradually arrived, and I went up to Sde-pa-drung. All of them offered him beer and said many consoling words to him. Then Steward Bde-Chen-grags-pa came, and taking my amber and coral ornaments wrapped in a cloth, he put them in the *gtor-khang*. He greeted Sde-pa-drung and said, "Sir! Please don't cry! It's true that you feel sad and terrible now, but, however it may be, she was a bride to 'Og-gro and she the girls of Khrab-shos-sbas-khur, inciting them to turn to religion, to had no plans to bear her responsibilities. Since she was always talking she robbed the king of 'Og-gro. Her death should cause you to suffer less than you would for a hurt thumb. For now, it's best you try to clear up this suffering of your eye, your hand, and this corpse outside." Again Sde-pa wept and said, "The sun in the sky is old at noon. We two were dear to each other only a very short time. I've no father or mother. Now the time has come when I must be separated from my only friend," and he wept many tears. Again he said, "There are stories that her kind of person becomes a *'das-log* (*shi-log*).

There are many stories, like Glingbza' Chos-skyid's, about those that were carried off and returned. I fervently hope she'll return as well. We'd best leave her body without touching it during the forty-nine days." Thereupon he wept many tears, and I thought, "I've not died, have I?" Again, thinking I'd not died, I took Sde-pa's hand and said over and over, "I'm not dead. There's no need to suffer," but Sde-pa and all, lord and servants, did not reply. I thought, "They're angry with me."

Then someone brought tea, and, as was my usual habit, I sat down facing Sde-pa-drung, close by him. They gave him and the others tea, and without giving me any, went away. I thought, "There isn't enough tea. They'll just make some more and bring it." Then Sde-pa-drung told A-khrung Tshe-ring-rab-brtan to make more tea. He broke off some tea and put it into his own pocket. I thought, "For a little bit of food, he commits such a sinful deed!" and I was disgusted with both master and servant. Then he offered tea to Sde-pa, and again Sde-pa didn't ask me to sit or eat with him. They passed none of it my way. I thought, "I've no will to eat," and feeling sad, I wept many tears.

Again I thought, "Alas! I said that I'd perform dharma, but I was not permitted to do so. I was not allowed to stay with my parents. You guaranteed you'd make me happy. Not being allowed to do dharma, I had to do mundane things. Now the way the servants have acted is the same as the way in which you've behaved. I have no will to eat and drink. Now I have to go to do dharma." Going out of the monastery gate, I looked back. I said to Sde-pa-drung, "When my parents first looked after me, I had the will to do dharma. You made me all kinds of promises. Now I have no will to eat and drink. You listened to what others said about me and threw me out of the company that eat and drink together. Generally, menfolk have neither substance nor marrow. Especially you, Sde-pa G.yu-rgyal-phun-tshogs, have no fibre. You've kept the ornaments given me as dowry by my parents. First, you looked on me as though I were a goddess. Now I wander like a dog. As for what is left of what you said to me, it is gone, just as what is left of beating water with a stick. They say a woman does not know what will become of her until they place a rope around her neck. Now it has happened to me. Many times I thought I must say, "Virgins! Do not do worldly deeds! Do dharma!" O Sde-pa-drung, servants, listen to me! Formerly my place was like a rolling stone falling into a clean canal (i.e., a misfit). Now go ahead and be happy with your wealth and material things. I will find satisfaction in the dharma. Sde-pa-drung, do not regret!"

Thinking I had to go to do dharma, I went off with nothing burdening me. All the others stayed there, sighing. There was not a single person who told me to stay.

This entire sequence plainly indicates a regression. If an ego's psychosocial relationships to significant others are thought of as a set of concentric rings with ego at the center, we begin here in the narrative sequence with the outermost circle—neighbors, of the least powerful emotive significance, and fall back ever closer to the more domestic and meaningful ties, from an estate steward (outside the home), to a servant (inside the home) and finally to the husband.

Next, she quits the scene entirely, and travels back to her natal village. On the way she falls in with a strange gang of spooks and goblins:

> From the upper part of the valley, many *mi-ma-yin* came all abustle. I listened to what they were saying: "Down there in Dge-bcu Lung there's a feast. Let's go!" and off they went, taking neither large steps or small. I followed them, and instantly I arrived at my birthplace, Dgebcu Kun-dga'-gling. Thinking I wanted to go to our house, all the dogs that had been tame before barked at me, and, afraid, I was unable to go. I heard the sounds of the chant leader, Chos-rgyal-bsod-nams and the preceptors doing a *gtor-ma* ceremony in the monastery. Thereupon they threw out many *gtor-ril* and water, and many beings of the six realms gathered there for the water and pills, like flies on rotten meat and rotten lees, and they carried it off like invited guests. Even the excess dishwater was carried off by lesser guests. After that, meek guests didn't get anything, and miserable because they were hungry and thirsty, they fell face down on the ground and wailed. Even though I was bigger and stronger than them and was hungry and thirsty, I was unable to go and get some out of shame and habits of modesty. Seeing this, I felt a powerful compassion but I had nothing to give them. I thought it was like the blind leading the blind and I wept much. Then I heard a disembodied voice of a woman:
>
> First, these beings do not have the fruits of previously accumulated virtues.
> Second, this is the way they experience their karmic suffering.
> Third, these are beings of small vision.
> When they come together, it causes suffering.
> You cannot help them, do not concern yourself.
>
> As soon as I heard that I felt a longing for my parents. There came to me the thought that I had to go to Zag-rum Monastery.

This sequence continues her regression from a noblewoman of high station and responsibility to a rejected mistress and lover to a creature just barely in control of the primary socializing graces (shame). The behavior of the *mi-ma-yin*, despite the exegesis of the mysterious voice, leaves little question regarding their status: they are unsocialized, orally driven children, fighting over scraps and throwing temper tantrums when they do not receive any. The *'das-log* is

only slightly "older" than they, although still closely identified with them (the blind leading the blind), inasmuch as she will not indulge in satisfying her oral drives with what is tantamount to excreta. This contention is not only based upon the form of the foods (pill-like solids and soiled water), but by the explicit notion of such authorities as Dpal-sprul Rinpoche who proclaims it is even meritorious to dedicate excrement to *pretas* (1971: 407).

Finally, she meets her mother:

> Again in the same instant, I arrived there. There was mother, circumambulating the *mchod-khang* of the monastery. I said to her, "Please give me some food and water!" Mother, saying nothing at all, and acting as if she hadn't seen me, went on circumambulating. Again I thought, "In former times, I'd have ridden a horse, and before me there would have gone a train of servants bearing gifts. Mother would have said, "Welcome," and I'd have been given reception-beer and been waited upon specially. But now Mother doesn't even look at me. Did she receive a letter from Sde-pa-drung before I came?" I thought, "She doesn't think of her own children, but others' children instead," and I became sad. Again, looking back at the temple, I went there and grasped her robe. I thought, "Previously I agreed with the advice that you, my parents, gave me about the world. I kept in my mind as much advice as you gave me. I thought I was Sde-pa-drung's young woman and his support. Even though he beat me much to discipline me, I thought one with a woman's form must undergo these difficulties, and so I did, without bothering you about them. Now, because I have no children, I've been expelled from his company. Since he did not think of the future, he did many spineless things to me, and I have nothing else to do but the dharma. Now since I have not made difficulties for you by arguing and disputing with you, give me something to eat. I will go to do dharma."

This entire sequence is highly marked by precisely the sort of behavior we would find in a child in the throes of separation: mood swings, the conflict of omnipotence in her demands to be fed and the denial of the wish-fulfilling mother, pushing away and clinging to object figures, leave-taking difficulties, a wish to manage the self and partake in the company of others at the same time and indecision. At any rate, her "fault" is now plain. Karma-dbang-'dzin believes she is being punished for not having achieved social maturation (... I have no children ...) and she is unable to cope with her ambiguous social position. Unable to become fully committed to one path of maturation—full-fledged religious commitment, or another—the full resolution of a respectable social role, the *'das-log* is subject to stresses which occasion a regressive, dissociated state.

Karma-dbang-'dzin seems to effect here the typical child's ploy of the hurt innocent, stating that she never caused her parents any problems and that they

reciprocate by paying attention not to her, but to others' children, and she departs for hell and limbo under a cloud of utter disillusionment. Equally typical in the *'das-log* biographies is the scene in which the *'das-log* departs because of anger. Long-wa A-drung, for instance, says (XVI, A: 161 ff.):

> When people I knew came to eat, they didn't give me any food, but brought this dog-food-like stuff to the dog's corpse. It has vexed me and I can't stand my relatives. I'm going to seek a distant land and a good lord.

But in both instances the tone is that of the child suffering anxieties of separation and ego splitting, demanding and not getting oral attention, in a world where it must take unwilling cognizance of others, who intrude upon its sources of satisfaction.[33]

The *'das-log* biographies, then, preach much the same message as do the texts and the clergy about death. These forewarn us in a rather abstract way to renounce our claims of corporeal, material and sentimental attachment in order to gain liberation, in a last chance to direct our attention to a higher order of purpose. The biographies concretize these last scenes of a person's life and ground them in a much more specific ethnosociology. Here the soul is depicted as regressing toward an earlier stage of identity formation, having been battered by one brutal disllusionment heaped upon another, as it attempts to individuate, beginning with the dissolution of the corporeal and ending with the most valued ties of love.

However; the soul, now stripped of its naivete has only begun its transformative journey. I have mentioned that the *'das-log* belongs to the traditions of Avalokiteśvara worship, and I would like to explore briefly what relationships and corresponding affective states seem necessary to complete death's tale. The whole point of Avalokiteśvara worship, as far as laymen are concerned, is to acquire salvatory merit to guarantee rebirth in paradise or as a human. Often the two seem identical to Tibetans, who are neither overly expectant about their truly paradisaical prospects nor about this world's perfection. However, since the other possibilities do not offer much comfort either, rebirth as a human, with the goods of human existence, seems not a bad choice. Cultic merit is made by well-intentioned repetitions of the *Maṇi* formula and occasional participation in the central cult rituals, principally *smyung-gnas* (abstinence), during which only certain foods (white foods and sweet foods) are taken at prescribed times and sex is abstained from. The underlying dogma of compassion requires that one must, in order to obtain salvation, become both parent and child to all living things. The general notion is outlined in one text, which reads: of all the beings in the world "there is not a single one that has not been one's parents. Because they interchange rebirths, one may not recognize them now as one's parents, but every being has been the parent of every other . . ." One must recognize this fact and "recollect their kindness to one . . . Even hawks and wolves love their off-

spring, so how can human parents not?" (Rme-ri dge-slong 1974: 9 ff.). In doing so, parents extenuate their own moral circumstances and collect sin for their children's sake. Hence they are reborn in all sorts of nasty circumstances and undergo suffering. Thus, all beings to whom we are simultaneously parent and child deserve our compassion and our succour. As we, through the cult practices, become identical with the deity or cult guru, our love for all creatures becomes as a mother's for her child. Avalokiteśvara, in his pacific form, presents as a highly maternal figure, soft, white, curvilinear, having prominent breasts, holding a lotus (a specifically feminine sign), and so forth. (Of course, Avalokita simply becomes a female in China and Japan). As R.A. Paul, in his superb psychoanalytic venture into Tibetan symbolism has recently shown, Avalokiteśvara "as benign savior thus combines the best elements of a compassionate and nourishing but desexualized mother . . . and is a model of the maternal imago (1982: chap. iv; see also, 1980), who is highly involved in the separation anxieties, which, we shall see, are central to our understanding of the *'das-log's* experience.

But with all this mother-love about, we must recall that the *'das-log* has already rejected or has been rejected by his mother or closest kinsmen, and has returned to an unfed, uncomforted transitional child-like state.[34] As we would expect, the maternal imago is split, the bad, the inattentive mother left behind, and a hallucinatory wish-fulfilling mother gained. The *'das-log* acquires, usually for the length of his other-worldly journey, and advisor-comforter-companion, i.e., a mother substitute. Most often they are gorgeous, dazzling white-clad figures who nourish the *'das-log* with nectar, and further allay the stresses that caused their initial problems to begin with by telling what they want to hear about their potential human careers. Karmadbang-'dzin's companion tells her (I, A: 38), "You don't recognize me, but my secret name is Ye-shes-rdo-rje-ma. We two are friends; we're linked together like a body and its shadow . . . "This reference may be taken to allude to the blissful state of normal symbiosis, and it also recalls Rje-btsun Rinpoche's remark (p. 31) that her early relationships with her mother were like being in the womb. In the company of the *ḍákiṇī*, the *'das-log* travels through limbo and hell, where the former carefully and patiently explains the circumstances of the scenes they encounter. These have to do in the main with the inexorable workings of karma, and for the *'das-log* the limbo period is one of relatively calm cognitive achievement, with fears of terrible happenings and encounters allayed by the companion, just as one might expect from a nurturant maternal figure. The *ḍākiṇī*-mother helps the *'das-log* achieve a mature understanding, instead of a helter-skelter mastery, of the world by providing the object constancy that was missing in relationships with natural figures. The terrible visions and monsters which the *'das-log* meets are explained as his own projections. The old ego has been stripped away and is in the process of gradual replacement by a new identity which replaces mere attempts at frustrated mastery and the projection of its evil parts as concrete objects with enlightened understanding.

At this point we might also note that the shamanic vehicle which the *'das-log* adopts concurs with what has been written of shamans in general. Paul, in his model of shamans versus other Sherpa specialists, notes that they are "appropriately associated with the height of conflict which occurs at the midpoint of life" (1982: 93) in transitting from junior to senior status, and that the Sherpa shamans whom he studied had experienced during this period a variety of marital problems (1970: 589).

The scene in hell is quite different, dominated by the Dhamarāja, This awesome figure contrasts rather readily with both with kindly *ḍūkiṇī* and with Avalokiteśvara whose avatar he is: blue-black in color, fierce, virile holding a sword, surrounded by creatures out of a nightmare. As an implaccable dispenser of justice, he initially inspires not kindly nurturance, but abject terror. Dharmarāja is the punishing suprago, an Oedipal figure, *par excellence*. His virility is expressed in his usual form—a horned bull. His mount, again a bull, rapes a supine figure of ambiguous sex, and he himself is often depicted with a prominent phallus.[35] In the judgement scenes Dharmarāja continually reminds those that come before him not to be afraid of him, that if one has done virtues to balance sin, every action will be considered in the defendant's favor. In the *'das-log's* case, horrid fascination shortly gives way to understanding. Patripotestas, it turns out, is disguised parental love, motivated by wider concerns. Kun-dga'-rang-grol (IX, B: f. 15 ff.) asks a junior *yama*

> Have you not even an instant's pity? Don't you act as witnesses for the Buddha?
> Don't you think of the ones that behave religiously? Where are the famous lamas?
> Don't they have pity for the beings in Bardo that must expiate their sins . . .?

It replies,

> Listen, young monk! If black and white were not divided, the human realm would be filled with *bdud* and *srin-po*. If there were no heavens and hells, all creatures would fall to bad rebirths.

It is not that Dharmarāja or his workers lack pity. It is that they have everyone's concern at heart. The Dharmarāja himself says, "If you see me outwardly, I am Dharmarāja; if you see me inwardly, I am Avalokiteśvara."

This inner-outer distinction is important. Just as the two monks from Khotan came to know that Srong-btsan-sgam-po, the wrathful king, was also Avalokiteśvara, and that what appeared to them as butchery was compassion (Dpal-sprul 1971: 303–4), so fear, inspired by a remote but just father-figure continues the process that leads to insight. To the *'das-log* Dharmarāja delivers a whole list of dyads, naming even the worthiest of the worldly worthy, who, in

contradistinction to himself or to the unconditioned sphere in general, should inspire fear and revulsion and therefore not be clung to:

Lamas = Bandits
Meditation masters = Insufferably ordinary men
Logicians = Parrots
Monks = Laymen
Mantrists = Venemous snakes
Lords = Black snakes
Youths = Wolves
Nuns = Whores, bitches
Women = Witches
The rich = Pretas
Saints = Braggarts
Teachers = Barking dogs[36]

Finally, shorn of delusion, the *'das-log* receives a final insight on insight from Dharmarāja before he is dismissed homewards with a message to the world. What seems important here is that whereas the *'das-log* entered his regressive hallucinatory state lacking the ability to integrate his split introjects, identifications and contradictory images of the self, he now is about to emerge from this experience having synthesized the dualities of social and psychological life through the rejection of the normative social view, and by moving toward a more ascetic indifference in which dualism disappears. In short, the *'das-log* has been reparented by no less than Dharmarāja and *ḍākiṇī*. He reanimates his corpse, studies with lamas, and goes on to lead a fully religious life, dedicated to the reparenting of others. Back in the world it is now men who are loathe to accept the *'das-log*, who, upon reanimation, is initially feared as a murderous zombie or ghost. However, ambivalence now properly belongs to other men and not the *'das-log*. As the Dharmarāja predicts in Karma-dbang-'dzin's case (I, A: 354):

Men of devilish extraction that revile the Buddha's teachings
And several witches of the butcher caste who bear you evil
Will try to kill you and you will be falsely accused.
Then you will rebut them with protestations of truth;
Impediments will be cleared away by the residents of the Buddha-sphere.

These are not isolated themes in the literature of the Avalokiteśvara cult; the maternal theme is prominent in the entire genre. It is in search of the bad mothers, who are suspect in their husbands' deaths, and who are rejected by their sons, that both Maudgalyāyana and Guru-Chos-bdang sojourn to hell. In both cases, mother's evil has deprived them of decent parental relations. Similar

scenes are played out in other biographies. In Byang-chub sengge's we find the following (X, A: 9 ff.):

> When I, Byang-chub-sengge, was ten years old, a neighbor was playing with a kid, and the kid broke my leg. As a result, my leg became lame. Then I thought, "If I, learning mantric teachings, do service and pray to the tutelary Dpal-gyi-snying-po, will it be harmonious?" As a result of that I got a rough dream. Then one night in a dream, a red-bodied woman said, "Son! This is not your tutelary. I am!" Then one night I had a vision again: I had gone to Tshogs-gsum Monastery and one night just at dawn, a red-colored woman with a pig's face said to me, "Get up! I will give you some nectar." I looked and she gave me some blood and brains inside a skull. She said, "Son this is your ordinary blessing." Then lifting the blood and brains on a knife, she poured them in my hand. "Son! Rub this on your leg! By tonight it will have helped your leg." She said this was a pure vision, and disappeared like a rainbow in the sky. I thought, "What sort of vision is this?" and the vision vanished.
>
> When I was in retreat at Ra-lang Mkhar-sgong Monastery, one night I dreamt that the people of the country ate unclean things. When I thought I did not want to eat unclean things, I dreamt a white boy told me not to eat them. Then I followed the white boy and he sat down in the center of a thousand-leafed lotus. He was surrounded by a thousand others like himself. All of them said the six syllables. All of them told me to say the six syllables. Again, the white boy had a conch vase in his hand. Inside it was something like milk, which he gave to me, saying it was nectar. Giving me a crystal rosary he said, "Son! Count this! Say the six syllables. I am Avalokiteśvara," and he disappeared like a rainbow in the sky."

It is this vision that Byang-chub-sengge doubts and which causes his "illness." We are entitled, if not obligated, to read these two obviously parallel scenes together. In the first, we encounter a form of Rdo-rje-phag-mo, who gives him blood and brains from a skull to cure his lameness. In the second, Avalokiteśvara gives him milk from a conch vase, and Byang-chub-sengge becomes his disciple. This scene appears to be a psychodrama of some complexity. The red (sexually potent) woman offers him the contents of a skull (a breast symbol) containing comingled red and white substances. She does so that he may cure his lame (flaccid) leg (penis). She is, in short, offering him instant sexual-cum-yogic success. Byang-chub-sengge appears not to follow her advice, and seems to associate her offer with the eating of filth in his next vision, against which Avalokiteśvara warns him. If we recollect the similar scene from Karma-dbang-'dzin's encounter with the *mi-ma-yin*, which we have quoted above, it will be recalled that she also rejects this infantile food (feces). What Avalokiteśvara appears to be doing is telling Byang-chub-sengge to grow up, but not through

the normal means. Instead the bodhisattva, who appears in this scene as a prepubescent (sexually inactive) boy, offers the *'das-log* a vase (breast) containing the sweet milk of cult success. Byang-chub-sengge, who opts for this solution in the end, clearly choses the path of symbiotic nurturance over that of sexual maturity. It should also be recalled here that all the *'das-log* are either monks, unmarried men, or women, who, if they are married, reject their families and follow a religious life in the final outcome. We also have in evidence the remaṛkable yogi's boast of Ketusengha, author of the *Thugs rje chen po'i rnam thar*, which focuses on the basic practices of Avalokiteśvara worship (p. 532 ff.):

I, the animal Ketusengha,
Was sent away, tossed out by my parents,
Because of malicious gossip.
Not being kept by my patrilineage, I wandered in the world.
I circled the lands of the six unhappy kinds of beings,
I experienced the suffering of impoverished *pretas*,
Suffering wherever I went.
Wherever I went, suffering naturally appeared.
I never saw a single day of happiness.
Sometimes I went, being nice to others.
Though I tried, I never was satisfied and I suffered.
Sometimes I stayed at the feet of nobles;
I experienced the suffering of having no power to move.
Sometimes I befriended witches and ghosts;
I experienced the suffering of being imprisoned like a piece of meat.
Sometimes I spun the wheel of retribution (had children);
I experienced the suffering of being unable to sustain them.
When unable to bear the punishment, being driven to despair.
I found a permanent lord:
The best of things found, Pha-rgan Zla-brtsod (his guru).
I gave him in service my body, speech and mind.
I thought without regret on sacrificing the very life which one usually holds dear.
My mind was perfectly satisfied.

I am the Yogi Ketusengha.
My matchless, perfect lord's daughter
Is Bde-gsal-'od-mtsho.
We are long-time lovers, our minds are mixed.
Now I have expelled all evil, there is none left.
Because of the many memories of freely giving alms
I have the foggy idea of hearing and thinking on the dharma.
The results of tantric practice are becoming manifest.
My mind and body have faith in my lama.

I am Ketusengha of dirty faith;
Ketusengha, a householder.
And you are worldly householders.
We two are dissimilar, different.
You worldly householders appear thus:
For a month, a year, however long,
You think whatever you see, whatever you like, is happiness.
That happiness exists I have not seen.
Like the way of the Nāgarāja.
I have experienced the suffering of things becoming ever worse.
When happiness changes, it produces the fury of the planets.
You are always seeking for each other's faults.
First, when there is no mental fog,
You suffer more than an exhausted deer on a dry hill.
Listen to me! If you do not hold the holy doctrine in your mind, you will be sad!

You suffer half your life away worrying about what you do not have.
As soon as you reap the results of having children,
You suffer more than a camel whose baby has died.
If you do not keep the holy doctrine in your mind, you will be depressed.

You suffer half your life away thinking of taking a chance.
As soon as the illusion of having family responsibilities shows itself
To be the equal of a nest of *pretas*,
You suffer more jealousy than a mother for her son.
If you do not keep the doctrine in your mind, you will be plagued by doubts.

You suffer half your life away looking for food and drink.
As soon as a son is born in the house, you send your daughter away.
You suffer more than the *gandharvas*.
If you do not keep the doctrine in your mind, you will be oppressed by thoughts of poverty.

You suffer half your life away without food or wealth.
In the end when you are old and bent,
You suffer worse than being stricken with the king's judgement.
If you do not keep the doctrine in your mind, you will be plagued by doubts.

You suffer half your life away being afraid of death.
Listen to me all you fortunate ones!
If you want to know about worldly suffering,
He who wanders powerlessly through rebirths
Is like one that wanders wittingly through poison.

All you courageous clergy
That enter the Buddhist doctrine,
Who wander the circle of permanent suffering,
Are like beggars slurping gruel.
In your younger years you study widely.
But just as you begin to see the heart of the Buddha
In your later life you wander the world;
It is like a ripe fruit falling.
There are those that commit the boundless sins,
Such as ghost-inspired suicide;
Clergy should do the opposite—
One creates one's own evil.

Again, a household is like a poisonous ocean,
An ocean of joyless suffering,
Through illusion, an ocean of vice.
Again, hear me, o fortunate ones!
Finding a house for such as a pig and snake (ignorance and anger)
Worldly men suffer half their life away becoming easily angered.
Finding a house for such as wives and mistresses,
They suffer half their life away finding no friend.
Finding a house, such as one of mortared stone,
They suffer half their life away finding no one to stay there.
Finding a house, such as one swept empty by a broom,
They suffer half their life away, having lost their food and wealth.
Finding a house, such as one for brown and yellow bears,
They suffer half their life away challenging others before they challenge them.
Finding a house, such as one where *gandharvas* and *btsan* gather,
They suffer half their life away doing nothing or making nothing.
Finding a house, such as one with a baby,
Is like living in the grasp of an enemy,
Like being surrounded by death-demons and ghosts
That bring suffering and despair.

If you desire firm plans, enter the gate of the doctrine!
To achieve the great goal, carry it through to the end!
You can do it by yourselves!
Listen to me, o fortunate ones!
My, this yogin's house, looks like this:
Because I am a lama's daughter,
I will not do impure deeds.
Because I am natural wisdom,
I have the beautiful ornaments thereof.
Because my body is not flesh and bone,

My *vajra*-body neither is born nor dies.
Because I am of Samantabhadra's lineage,
Whatever I do, I am able to control my mind and clear my thoughts.
Because my vows have no lies,
There is nothing secret about them and my way of life.
As soon as I see either rich or poor,
I have no avarice for what is given in worship . . .
When I rely on famous lamas,
My ignorance is completely cleared, my wits sharpened.
When others ask me questions,
I am expert in explaining such is or is not the case.
When the golden powers of Mahāyāna are collected,
I can concentrate on practices that accomplish good for this life or the next.

You, aside from being like me, should have no time for other practices.
Because of love for all beings,
I have no natural progeny that no one can tell me not to have.
I, not omitting sterile women, am happier . . .
I have bought the illusionary house of a yogin.
You others have bought houses of cattle and horses.
Your houses are an illusion:
One day they will fall down, of this there is no doubt.
In this very lake of rays
Happiness and clarity will never be separated.
I, a yogin, perform the emptiness of mind.
You others perform the emptiness of retribution.
I know whatever my mind is doing, and it is good.
All the ornaments of wisdom are attractive.

Finally, I repay the graciousness of Three Bodies.
I, a yogin, rear my disciples that way.
Your worldly rearing looks like this:
When you have nothing, it is harder to get water than meat and beer.
When you have got things, they are the cause of suffering and you fear death.
Finally, like an evil carnivore or raven.
You do not take care of the parents to whom you owe gratitude.
And you do whatever sort of beating and stealing that you know.
You kill your parents with weapons, starvation and poison.
I do not want this sort of child rearing,
Not reciprocating the gratitude I owe the dharma.
Your own body, speech and mind act as your enemy,
And your own sons are born as your enemies.
I do not want that sort of child rearing.

As for sons, they are natural retribution.
Only a few sons repay their parents' kindness.
Do not do things on your children's account, do them on your own.
The best of sons is the holy dharma.
Hence, I make firm plans to do the holy dharma.

Here again, we find in the opening verse the same structural theme of expulsion and disillusionment evident in the *'das-log* biographies. This time, however, maturity is attained and ambivalence resolved through a spiritual marriage, in which Ketusengha depicts his personal transformation from "animal" and "dirtiness" to other-worldly householder. His bitter attack on worldly relations between parents and children leaves few doubts as to the sources of his anxieties. Though married to his guru's daughter, he abjures even the thought of progeny by her, even though he has already had children in his previous worldly life. Through the works of the dharma, however, he has transformed himself: he is both male and female ("a lama's daughter") whose children are disciples, and like Avalokiteśvara, both a father, a mother and a child to the dharma.

Notes

* I would like to gratefully acknowledge the kind assistance given me in preparing this paper by the staff of the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, in particular Mr. Tashi Tsering. I would also like to thank Mr. Ngawang Gelek and the Venerable Sde-gzhung and Khrin-'du Rinpoches for their help. My research on the topic of *'das-logs* has been generously supporled by the National Endowment for the Humanities and the American Institute of Indian Studies. Finally, I would like to thank most deeply Geshe Nawang Nornang of the University of Washington for his many hours of help.

1 I have based this study on an examination of the following sources. Quotations and citations in the text are based on the arrangement below.

I. Karma-dbang-'dzin

A. 'Das log karma dbang 'dzin gyi rnam thar (Yeshay Donden Ms). Gedan Sungrab M-inyan G-yunphel, vol. 55, Ngawang Gelek Demo (ed.), New Delhi, 1973.

B. -gyi rnam thar *in* Two Visionary Accounts of Returns from Death. Dolanji: Tibetan Bonpo Monastic Centre, 1974.

C. -kyi rnam thar *in* Two *'das-log* Stories from the Library of Lhakhang Lama, Delhi, 1978.

D. Bka' yi phrin lan pa mkha' 'gro ma karma dbang 'dzin bar do'i dmyal khams su byon nas 'khor 'das kun gyi chos rgyal rin po ches las las dkar nag dbye ba'i 'bras bu rnam thar *in* University of Washington xylograph, chap. *ca* (see Note 6).

The entire action of the *rnam-thar* takes place within an area of Lho-brag several hundred square miles in circumference. Her natal village is Kun-dga'-gling in the upper valley of Dge-bcu. A Rnying-ma-pa nunnery was situated here. She is sent as a bride to Bkra-shis-'og-(')gro, a *dpon-khag* family in the Khra (Phra) valley, about thirty miles north-east of her natal place. Internal references place the biography in the mid-eighteenth century.

II. Guru Chos-dbang
  A. O rgyan gyi rgyal po padma 'byung gnas mchog gi bu chen gter ston gu ru chos dbang kyi yum dmyal khams nas drangs rab kyi rnam thar *in* University of Washington xylograph, chap. *tha*.
  B. Sras gu ru chos kyi dbang phyug gi rnam par thar pa *in* Rare Tibetan Texts from Lahul. Dolanji: Tibetan Bonpo Monastic Centre, 1974.

III. Gling-bza' Chos-skyid
  A. 'Das log gling bza' chos skyid kyi rnam thar *in* Two Visionary Accounts . . .
  B. Gling za chos skyid *in* Three *'das-log* Stories (Lha-khang sprul-sku Ms). Delhi, 1977.
  C. Dmyal ba mi yul kyi sa mishams shi gson gnyis gyis bang chen bka'i 'phrin pa gling sa chos skyid bar do'i gnas su byon nas 'khor 'das kyi rgyal po chen pos dkar nag dbye ba'i 'bras bu'i rnam thar *in* University of Washington xylograph, chap. *ja*.

  Chos-skyid hails from somewhere north of Sde-dge, perhaps Gling-tshang. Khrin-'du Rinpoche informs me that the ruins of a nunnery built by her were to be seen in A-'khro in upper Sga, near the village of Ye-rgyas. See Stein (1959: 401, note 13) on her dates (sixteenth century).

IV. Chos-dbang-rgyal-mo
  Dmyal ba mi yul gnyis kyi sa mtshams shi bson gyi bang chen bka'i 'phrin pa chos dbang rgyal mos dmyal khams gnas su byon nas 'khor 'das kun gyi chos rgyal rin po ches dge sdig bdye 'byed mdzad pa'i 'bras bu'i rnam thar. *in* University of Washington xylograph, chapter *cha*.
  She comes from the still extant village of G.ya'-sgo in the Srad region of Gtsang. The text refers to a Dge-'khor *bla-brang*, of which informants from the area had no knowledge. Internal events place the biography in the seventeenth century.

V. Bstan-'dzin-chos-sgron
  Ms. examined in India by this author.
  She comes from Mus. Much of the visionary action takes place at Mt. Kailash. She is supposed to have been reborn as another *'das-log* called Jinalaka (Tibetan orthography unknown).

VI. 'Dre Rgyal-ba'i-blo-gros
  'Dre rgyal ba'i blo gros zhes bya ba'i grub thob geig gi ma bar do nas drangs tshul, *in* University of Washington xylograph. chap. *da*.

VII. Snang-sa 'od-'bum
  Dmyal yul mi yul sa mtshams shi gson gnyis kyibka'i 'phrin pa snang sa ngan song gnas su byon skabs 'khor 'das chos rgyal chen pos dkar nag dbye 'byed mdzad pa'i 'bras bu'i rnam thar, *in* University of Washington xylograph, chap. *nya*.

VIII. Padma-chos-skyid Ms. examined in India by this author.

IX. Bya-bral Kun-dga'-rang-grol
  A. Bya bral kun dga' rang grol bya ba de mkha' 'gro gsang ba ye shes kyi sangs rgyas kyi zhing khams drug dang/dmyal khams bco brgyad du lam sna mdzad rab kyi lo rgyus, *in* University of Washington xylograph, chap. *ka*.
  B. Dmyal ba mi yul gyi sa mtshams shi gson gnyis kyi bang chen bka'i 'phrin pa bya bral kun dga' rang grol gyi dmyal khams gnas su byon nas 'khor 'das kun gyi chos rgyal rin po ches dkar nag dbye ba'i 'bras bu'i rnam thar, *in* University of Washington zylograph, chap. *kha*.

The *'das-log* seems to be from central Gtsang, not far from Shigatse. The text is probably late seventeenth or early eighteenth century.

X. Byang-chub-sengge

A. Spyan ras gzigs kyi sprul pa 'das log byang chub sengge'i dmyal snang shar ba las/dge sdig gi shan dbye dang gshin rje chos kyi rgyal po'i 'phrin yig rgyas pa (Dgon-po dkar-po Ms.). New Delhi, 1976.

B. Chos rgyal chen pos bka' yis 'phrin lon pa sprang byang chub seng ges bar do dmyal bar byon nas 'khor 'das kyi dkar nag dbye ba'i 'bras bu'i rnam thar mdor bsdus, *in* University of Washington xylograph, chap. *ga*.

C. Dmyal nang rang grol byang chub sengges dmyal khams su skyabs gnas rnams la mchod bstod gsol 'debs phul ba'i le'u nas mdor bsdus pa don zab rmad cha, *in* University of Washington xylograph, chap. *nga*.

Byang-chub-sengge comes from Ra-lang, near Mkhar-agong Monastery, on the right bank of the Nyag-chu. His father was a Bonpo *sngags-pa* of some repute. He himself is considered to be the rebirth of Gtsang-pa Legs-grub, in turn the reincarnation of Vairocana's disciple, G.yu-sgra-snying-po. He lived in the mid-eighteenth century. In the tolerant atmosphere of eastern Tibet, he studied with both Rnying-ma and Bka'-brgyud teachers, especially those from Ka:-thog. He is best known for his method of offering votary flags (*jo-dar*). There is a reference to him and this method in *The Biography, with a selection of Songs of Nyag-bla Padma-bdud-'dul*, Dehra Dun, 1975, page 91. A manuscript copy of his method is in the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives (No. 10345). I am much indebted to Mr. Tashi Tsering for these references.

XI. Bla-ma Byams-pa-bde-legs

Bla ma byams pa bde legs kyis bar do dang bskal ba'i gzigs snang dang chos kyi rgyal po phrin bsur rnams, *in* Three *'das-log* Stories . . .

Byams-pa-bde-legs gives his birthplace as Sna-dkar in Smad-mkhas-smad, west of Dpal-gyi Ri in the northern part of southern Stod. He records that he studied Mahāmudrā at Lo-ro Monastery with an A-khu Rinpoche Ro-snyoms-rdo-rje, who in turn was a student of one Mkhas-grub Pha-rgod-gzhon-nu, a direct disciple of Gtsang-smyon Heruka. His *'das-log* experience took place in a Fire-Male-Monkey year, possibly 1596.

XII. Dbu-bza' Rin-chen-sgron-gsal

Dbu za rin chen sgron gsal gyis shi log dge sdig gsal byed 'phrul gyi me long *and* Dbu za'i shi log 'jig rten myul du bstel bder gshegs rig 'dzin mkha' gro rnams dang 'jal ba'i lo rgyus, *in* Three Bonpo Visionary Accounts of Hell. New Thobgyal: Tibetan Bonpo Monastic Centre, 1973.

XIII. Maudgalyayana

Mnyam med shakya'i rgyal no nyan thos dgra bcom pa mo'u 'gal gyi bus a ma dmyal ba nas bton rab kyi le'u, *in* University of Washington xylograph, chap. *ta*.

XIV. Ye-shes-mtsho-rgyal

Rnal 'byor gyi grub thob ye shes misho rgyal gyi rnam thar nas sdig blon shan ti bya ba dmyal ba las bton tshul gyi lo rgyus, *in* University of Washington xylograph, chap. *na*.

XV. La-phyi sprul-sku

La-phyi sprul bsku'i shi log dmyal khams lo rgyus, *in* Three Bonpo Visionary Accounts . . . La-phyi is located to the northwest of Sde-dge. An informent tells me that the biography is nineteenth century.

XVI. Long-wa A-drung
  A. Gshin rje chos kyi rgyal po gsung phrin, *in* Two Obscure Texts of the Avalokitśvara cult from Spiti, New Delhi, 1975.
  B. Khama pa a khrung, *in* Three *'das-log* Stories . . .
  A-drung comes from Snyag-mda' Phug in Zil-yul in Smar-khams. Local informants could not identify the place and suggested it no longer existed. The colophon (A: 261–2) tells us that the text was written at the behest of Gung-thang chos-rgyal go(ng)-ma chen-po Khri Bdud-'dul-mgon-po-lde also known as Khri Kun-bzang-nyi-zla-grags-pa, whose reign dates are in the first half of the sixteenth century, in Water-Snake Year (1533). The name of the scribe who wrote the text and the scribe who took down A-drung's story are both named Rnam-rgyal. If they are the same person, A-drung's "illness" takes place at the age of twenty-five in a Water-Dragon Year. This might put his birth as late as 1508. I am much indebted to Mr. David Jackson for checking these dates in his copy of Rig-'dzin Tshe-dbang-nor-bu's Bod rje lha btsan po'i gdung rabs mnga' ri smad mang yul gung thang du ji ltar byung ba'i tshul deb gter dwangs shel 'phrul gyi me long (Burmiok Athing Ms.), ff. 17b–18b.

XVII. Sangs-rgyas-chos-'dzom
  Rje btsun spyan ras gzigs kyi sprul pa 'das log sangs rgyas chos 'dzom gyis zhag bdun mar dmyal khams dang yar zhing khams bcas mjal ba'i lo rgyus rnam thar khyad par can. New Delhi, n.d.
  Her birth place is Lho-ljongs Bkra-shis-sgang (Bhutan). She is the rebirth of Karma-dbang-'dzin and her birth date is given as a Dog Year, probably the late seventeenth or early nineteenth century.

2 For comparative material, see, e.g., Boswell, 1972; Brandon, 1967; Eliade, 1977; Hyde, n.d.; Owen, 1970; Patch, 1950. For sources relating specifically to the Tibetan, see Lauf, 1977; Poucha, 1952; Scherman, 1892.

3 For an excellent statement of the relationship of charisma to sacred biography, see Keyes, 1982. On sacred biographies in general, see Reynolds and Capp, 1976. See Paul, 1977, for an interesting case in which an attempt was made to gain charismatically derived benefits by falsely claiming *'das-log* status.

4 See Ardussi and Epstein, 1978.

5 See Bacot, 1921; Duncan, 1955; Paul, 1982 for translations and analysis.

6 Bya bral pa kun dga' rang grol dang sprang byang chub seng ges gcos chos kyi rgyal pos bka'i phrin lon pa skya bo pho mo'i rnam thar. Referred to in Note 1 as University of Washington xylograph. It was printed on the Gser-leog estate of the Ka-shod-pa family, probably in the early twentieth century.

7 See, e.g., Crapanzano and Garrison, 1977; Wallace, 1963; Zaretsky and Leone, 1974.

8 Za ma tog bkod pa *and* btsan bcos, Delhi, 1978.

9 See Vostrikov, 1970. The *Za ma tog bkod pa* was compiled in 1514 and the *Ma ṇi bka' 'bum* in the fifteenth century.

10 Zhig-po-gling-pa Gar-gyi-dbang-phyug-rtsal, *Thugs rje chen po 'khor ba las sgrol gyi chos skor*, Gangtok, 1976, pp. 20 ff.

11 See Snellgrove and Richardson, 1968, chap. 3. For a short biography of Guru Chosd-bang, see Dargyay, 1977. The injunction to teach in the marketplace is found in his *Maṇi bka' 'bum*, version A, p. 224. See also p. 423 ff. where he composes a *na-rag gdong-sprugs* text out of pity for those in hell. Cf. also Padma-rnam-rgyal, *Khrom la maṇi bskul ba'i thabs sbyor dngos rjes gsum tshang ba thugs rje'i lcags kyu.*

12 See Note 1. It should also be noted that Maudgalyayāna went to hell many times for

various purposes. In his commentary on Karma-chags-med's *Rnam dag bde chen zhing gi smon lam*, Rme-ri dge-slong notes that Maudgalyayāna took two lazy nephews of Gna' Kun-dga'-bo to hell in order to have them mend their ways. It so frightened them that they eventually became *arhants* (p. 326). Maudgalyayāna died as a direct result of a trip from hell. On a trip there he meets the dead Kun-tu-rgyu teacher 'Od-srung-rdzogs-byed who asks him to tell his disciples to follow the Buddha, lest they meet the same fate. He does so, and the Kun-tu-rgyu accuse him of blasphemy, where-upon they beat him and he dies of his wounds (Dpal-sprul 1971: 183–4). Byang-chub-Sengge notes that in hell flowers grow from Maudgalyayāna's footprints (X, A: 145).

13 For Chinese sources, see Frick, 1950; Seaman, 1976; Waley, 1960. While I have not found Southeast Asian sources, see Keyes, 1982, for an interesting parallel found in Thai ordination rituals.

14 See Evans-Wentz, 1960; Lauf, *op. cit.*; Poucha, *op. cit.*; Trungpa and Freemantle, 1975; Thurman, 1978.

15 On the relationship of text and context, see Keyes and Daniel (ed.), 1982.

16 Such statements are, of course, commonplace in all Buddhist introductory texts.

17 See Lichter and Epstein, 1982, for a full discussion of love and friendship as a Tibetan "good" and their ironical implications as models of suffering. See also Ortner, n.d.

18 A lce rig stong rgyal mo'i rnam thar *in* Two Texts of the *a-lce lha-mo'i rnam thar* Genre from Gnas Padma-bkod, Delhi, 1977.

19 Plum and Posner note that coma with psychiatric disorders is rare (1966), but Wittkower and Prince (1974: 542) write that schizophrenic catatonic states are more common in Asian countries: "The frequency of catatonic stupors in these countries may be due to the teaching both by Hinduism and Buddhism of social and emotional withdrawal as an acceptable mode of reacting to difficulties; the frequency of cataonic rigidity and negativism in Indian schizophrenics may be due to a traditional passive-aggressive response to a threatening world." It is to be noted here that various cultures mold in various ways the content of hallucinations and delusions.

20 See Lati Rinpoche and Hopkins (1979) for an extended discussion of the dying process.

21 See Ardussi and Epstein, 1978.

22 The question of whether *'das-logs* really die, of course, is a cogent one. Answers to this question vary, naturally, and cover a wide range of opinion. Some informants regard the *'das-log* as truly dead, and attribute their return to "a miracle of Avalokiteśvara." Others point out that they are really *ḍākinī* or avatars of Avalokita in any regard so that perhaps natural law does not apply to them. Others are of the opinion that the *rnam-shes* is highly partible and one can be all but corporeally dead. They point out that, barring the extraordinary powers of sainthood, or super-natural status, once Bardo has been entered a new rebirth is demanded; that the body of the *'das-log* does not compose; and that the *byang-sems* do not emerge. Therefore, some element of the life-process must be present. Most seem to regard the *'das-log* experience as a form of "vision" (*nyams-snang*) and point of the *Sman bla'i mdo* (*Rgyud, ta:* 429 ff.) in which the Buddha says: "In future times and lives, beings will be completely afflicted by various diseases and chronic diseases will dry up and consume their bodies' flesh. Their lips will become dry and they will just on the point of dying (*'gum pa la ni mngon du phyogs*). They will be surrounded by their loved ones, kin and family. They will see darkness in all directions. Yama's people will take them and the *rnam-shes* sleeping in their bodies and take it before Yama-Dharmarāja. The person, and the god born together with him and whatever there is following him will write exactly all his virtues and sins and give it to Dharmarāja, who will question him and examine him and will accordingly divide his virtues and

sins. . . . For the sake of the patient take refuge in Bcom-ldan-'das De-bzhin-gshegs-pa Sman-gyi -bla Bai-ḍūr-rya'i-'od and do its connected rituals. . . . The *rnam-shes* will return and it will have been like a dream. . . "

23 See, e.g., *Blang dor gces bsdus gsal ba'i sgron me*, Dharamsala: Shes rig par khang, pp. 95–9.

24 See Lichter and Epstein, *op. cit.*, and Epstein, 1977.

25 In relation to the *'das-log* as a creative figure, Wallace (1959: 58) notes that "a vast quantity of content has been introduced into the cultural repetoire of mankind by hallucinatory ideation. . . ." McKellar (1977: 94) remarks that hypnogogic stetes can produce "convincing supernatural etiologies even in unbelievers." See also the papers in Siegel and West, 1975 and Keup, 1970 on the induction of and cross-cultural comparison of hallucinatory states.

26 Remarks such as these are common in the *'das-log* texts and seem to emphasize the ethical aspect of action versus worldly notions of ascribed status. Even though one's born station is high as a result of past virtue, virtuous action cannot be foresworn.

27 Bya-bral Kun-dga'-rang-grol's biography gives a detailed description of the various parts of Bardo (f. 2b ff.):

a. G.ya' ma sngo sing nge ba
b. Bshan thang dmar po
c. Bye ma'i la
d. Spang gshong
e. 'Khrul snang bar do
f. Dmar sgang gi grong mo che
g. Brag ri thor leags zur pa 'dra
h. Ma thar lus pa sgang
i. Bca' 'phrang gong ma
j. Mun pa'i gling
k. Bskal pa'i me dpung
l. Ri dmar mchin ba 'dra
m. Brag ri sngon po
n. Khrag mtsho khol ma
o. Ri dkar po
p. Shal ma ri
q. Ral gri lo ma nags tshal
r. Mar me byang thang
s. Grang dmyal gong ma
t. Rdo leb thang
u. Chus lung

28 *'Das-logs* may also tour the other realms of being, but these are perfunctory visits at best. For example in Byang-chub-sengge's biography (X, A), which is 273 pages long, only pp. 203–7 concern realms other than hell and the human realm. For a brief description of hell see Sgam-po-pa, 1959: 57 ff. For a comparative study of Buddhist hells, see Law, 1973 and Matsunaga and Matsunaga, 0972.

29 A cursory survey of the biographies produces the following list of causes for punishment: highway robbery, stealing from the clergy or holy places, causing others to commit sin, giving unclean things to religious persons, giving false weight and measure, selling and making beer, prostitution, saying the Three Gems are untrue, not respecting parents and teachers, abusing the clergy or their patrons, being an oracle or diviner, doing black magic and making hail, being jealous of others' good deeds, saying the Mani is untrue, doing astrology, poisoning, beating animals and overworking them, castrating animals, hunting, being a smith or fletcher, butchering or slaughtering animals, killing lice, plowing fields and killing bugs, being a bad doctor, having perverse views, fornicating, not repaying debts, robbing corpses, pretending to be a *'das-log*, etc. Causes for a good rebirth in the cases tried before Dharmarāja are: being a repentful sinner, doing *smyung-gnas* and other ceremonies, making offerings, being kind to the weak, giving a place to stay to travellers and pilgrims, dressing statues, giving *mang-ja*, keeping one's vows, being kind to the sick, and so forth. The odds for receiving punishment are obviously overwhelming.

30 For similar scenes where saints, lamas, and *maṇi-pas* save their followers, see, e.g., I, A: 292, 325; X, A: 87–167 *passim*; XV: 548.

31 For an overview of "classical" shamanism, see Eliade, 1972. On possession and non-

possession states, see Bourguignon, 1968, 1973 and Sargent, 1974. For reviews of the literature see the papers in Hitchcock and Jones, 1976, esp. those by Paul and Rinhard; and Nowak and Durrant, 1977. For shamans in the Tibetan culture area, see also Hoffman, 1972; Paul, 1971 and 1982, Ortner, 1978 and n. d.; Peters, 1982. See also Durrant, 1979 and Obeyesekere, 1981 for interesting comparisons in other Asian cultural areas.

32 See also Cameron, 1963: 362–3 on regression in dissociative reactions; see also Prince Savage, 1972 for an excellent review of the literature.

33 It might be asked why the *'das-log's* regression is only partial. Regression to a more archaic state in which all objects become estranged or the distinction of self and object were entirely lost would result in either schizoid self-destruction or a mystical enstasis. Neither of these is apparent in the biographical material. While *'das-logs* exhibit some signs of the schizoid condition, their partial regression makes it possible for them to become reconstituted through the reactivation of primitive ego components.

34 Here the question is: who is it that really wants to leave, the separating ego or the maternal figure. The answer is, of course, to be sought in the ambivalence of the rapprochement stage. We might also note that notions of split female imagos also occur in the *bar-do* writings: The *Mani-bka'-'bum* (p. 437) says that "in the *bar-do* of death, it is like a nephew going to a house of an unkind aunt (*a-ne*)."

35 For a full study of this figure, see Paul, 1982, chaps. 5 & 6. This view also concords with Paul's statements (1971: 195 ff) that in Tibetan cultures, fathers are remote and powerful, but essentially benevolent, figures. The biographies are notable for their absence of references to fathers, except as they occur in the figure of the Dharmarāja and in vague reference to parents.

We also note the difference of the *'das-log's* psychological experience and that of the saint, such as Maudgalyāyana and Guru Chos-'dbang, who visits hell. In the latters' case, we are witnessing a patent Oedipal drama. The texts imply that their mothers are implicated in the death of their fathers, who leave the mothers to the sons to be looked after. However, the sons, both juveniles cannot adequately fill their fathers' shoes, and so the mothers die. Oedipal guilt drives them to rescue the 'bad mothers' to complete their fathers' wishes, and in both cases the phallic symbolism of beating down the doors of hell with staffs (in Maudgalyāyana's case, borrowed from the Buddha, the ultimate father) is evident.

36 This model of inside/outside is, of course, based on the *Za ma tog*. See also, e.g., I, A: 194 ff.; 347 ff.; III, A: 280; IX, B: f. 34a ff.; X, A: 240 ff.

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77

AMBIGUOUS SEXUALITY

Imagery and interpretation in Tantric Buddhism[1]

Roger R. Jackson

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A critic of the thesis that asceticism and celibacy are central to mysticism might well turn for support to the Buddhist and Hindu tantras, whose practices often are assumed to involve 'sex in the service of enlightenment'. I will attempt to show that the issue is not nearly so simple, by demonstrating the ambiguity of sexual imagery in Buddhist tantric texts and the historical ambivalence of the tantric tradition itself regarding the place and meaning of sexuality. After presenting three highly encoded 'performance-songs' (*caryāgīti*) of the Indian Buddhist adept Kāṇha (11th century), I will discuss the nature of interpretation in the tantric tradition, then the various ways in which the sexual imagery in Kāṇha's performance songs may be read. There appear to be at least four possible levels of interpretation: (1) literal, where sexuality is overt, (2) symbolic, where the surface sexuality is a metaphor for certain meditative achievements, (3) 'higher' literal, where the symbolized meditative achievements are actualized by ritual sexuality, and (4) yogic, where sexual rites are revealed to entail sublimation rather than indulgence, asceticism rather than eroticism. By way of conclusion, I will address some possible criticisms of my analysis, and suggest broader comparative issues arising from it.

I. Introduction

In most comparative works on mysticism, the figures chosen for discussion — whether Asian or Western, male or female — are predominantly celibate. St Augustine (at least, eventually), Bernard of Clairvaux, Meister Eckhart, Catherine of Siena, Teresa of Avila, St John of the Cross, Thomas Merton, Rabi'a, Buddhaghosa, Nāgārjuna, Śaṅkara, Milarepa, Tsong kha pa, Huineng, Dōgen: all of these exemplary figures were unmarried. This hardly is surprising when

we consider that the social milieu most conducive to what we call 'mysticism' traditionally has been the monastery or nunnery. If it is assumed that mysticism usually is the outcome of a delicate, difficult process of spiritual growth, it is easy to see how the monastery, deliberately distanced from the common social world, would be the institution most likely to produce mystics. Many traditions have further assumed that because of the social and psychological difficulty of spiritual life, worldly desires — especially sexual desire — are impediments, to be left at the monastery door. There have, of course, been married mystics, especially in traditions less affected by monasticism, such as Judaism and Islam, or where monasticism has been reinterpreted, such as some forms of Tibetan and Japanese Buddhism. Overall, however, such figures tend to be the exception rather than rule, and in their sexual comportment are chaste if not downright celibate. It is not unreasonable, then, to conclude that mysticism is closely related to the practice of celibacy and, more broadly, asceticism.[2]

A critic of the idea that celibacy and asceticism are central to mysticism might well turn for support to the Hindu and Buddhist tantric tradition, which appears not only to shun chastity, celibacy and asceticism, but actively to encourage sexuality on the path to spiritual liberation. Certainly, popular conceptions of Tantra tend to revolve around the place of sex in the tradition. A perusal of the titles listed in *Books in Print* under the subject-headings 'Tantra' and 'Tantrism' reveals the following: *Tantra: the Indian Cult of Ecstasy, Secrets of Western Tantra: the Sexuality of the Middle Path, Jewel in the Lotus: the Sexual Path to Higher Consciousness* and *Tantra: the Art of Conscious Loving.* The perception of Tantra as being 'sexual yoga', or 'sex in the service of enlightenment' is not without basis. Images of tantric deities, especially Buddhist paintings and statues from Nepal and Tibet, often have an explicitly sexual component to them, whether the deity is depicted in sexual union with a consort, or alone but filled with sexual desire. Tantric texts provide further evidence of the place of sexuality in the tradition. Whereas non-tantric Buddhist sūtras[3] invariably begin with the phrase, 'Thus have I heard — at one time the Lord dwelt in the [town, city or grove where the discourse occurred]', many tantras begin, 'Thus have I heard — at one time the Lord dwelt in the adamantine vulva that is the essence of the body, speech and mind of all the Tathāgatas'.[4] In addition, many tantric texts instruct the practitioner to break traditional Buddhist vows, including that renouncing adultery.[5] Further, some tantras give explicit instructions on sexual techniques to be practised either during empowerments (Sanskrit: *abhiṣeka*) or yogic practice (*sādhana*).[6] Finally, a number of tantric 'saints', from such Indian 'great adepts' (*mahāsiddha*) as Kāṇha and Śavara, to Tibetan figures like the Ṣixth Dalai Lama and 'Brug pa kun legs, have sung openly of their sexual relationships.

This essay will examine critically the thesis that the practices of Tantra prove that chastity, celibacy and asceticism are not central to mystical traditions. I will take as my exemplar the 11th century Indian Buddhist adept Kāṇha, who is credited with composing numerous tantric texts, including at least thirteen of the

collected 'performance-songs' (*caryāgīti*) preserved in Old Bengali and also in Tibetan translation. Kāṇha is a particularly interesting figure to consider, in part because his songs have the ring of autobiography, in part because he has been much discussed in Western writings about tantra, and in part, too, because his biography is problematic and his works not discussed much by Indian or Tibetan commentators — making him a sort of *tabula oscura* (if not *rasa*) onto which any number of interpretations may be (and have been) projected without fear of definitive contradiction. The main focus of this essay will be three songs in which Kāṇha makes explicit reference to his sexual relationship with a low-caste woman. The essay's first section will introduce Kāṇha and the songs. The second, and central, section will consider a number of different ways in which the songs might be interpreted, with particular attention to Kāṇha's view of 'sexuality'. The third and concluding section addresses some possible objections to my analysis, and suggests a number of broader historical, hermeneutical and definitional issues that arise from my analysis.

II. Kāṇha and his songs

Like so many pre-modern figures in Indian religion, Kāṇha is historically obscure, to the point where we cannot be certain whether he is one person or many. Tibetan tradition assumes that the figure known in India as Kāṇha, Kṛṣṇa or Cāryapā (as well as variations of each of these),[7] is one person, whose translated name is Nag po spyod pa (from Kṛṣṇācārya), and who is the author of over a hundred works in the tantra section of the canonical collection of translated Indian commentaries, the *bs Tan'gyur*. This same Nag po spyod pa is listed as one of the eighty-four 'great adepts' (*mahāsiddha*) of Buddhist tantra, most of whom seem to have lived shortly before or after the end of the first millennium of the Common Era, and many of whom figure prominently in the guru-lineages (*guruparampara*) of the Tibetan schools that were the heirs of late Indian Buddhism.[8]

Biographical details on Nag po spyod pa are given in Abhayadatta's 12th century Sanskrit text, *Lives of the Eighty-Four Great Adepts*,[9] and in a number of Tibetan histories, including those of Bu ston (14th century)[10] and Tāranātha (17th century).[11] Unfortunately, none of the three sources tells the same story about Nag po spyod pa. Abhayadatta's Nag po spyod pa is a proud and impulsive adept who ignores the advice of his guru, Jālandhari, and, despite miraculous powers, dies by a curse from a woman he has wronged. Bu ston's Nag po spyod pa is the disciple of Rāmaṇi, is himself an expert in the eight magical attainments, and is guru to disciples who will master Mahāmudrā, the 'great seal' that is the goal of tantric practice. Tāranātha's Nag po spyod pa is actually two figures, an elder and a younger; the former, the disciple of Jālandhari, converts a king to Buddhism,[12] while the latter, a disciple of Nag po spyod pa the elder, is a master of various tantras and author of many treatises.[13] The widely varying accounts given by different authors simply make it impossible to know

whether they are referring to one Kāṇha or many — given the common occurrence of a name like Kṛṣṇa, we might well-suspect the latter. Even if they are discussing the same Kāṇha, we cannot be certain that that Kāṇha was the same person who wrote the songs included in the *Caryāgītikośa*, let alone when, precisely, he might have lived — though the 11th century seems the best guess.[14]

Thus, for information about the Kāṇha of the *Caryāgītikośa*, we are limited to the songs themselves — as indicated above, this is not without its advantages, since the relative lack of biographical information about or commentaries on Kāṇha the songster will allow us to explore his meaning unburdened with an excess of traditional interpretive baggage. Twelve of the nearly fifty songs in the *Caryāgītikośa* are attributed to Kāṇha. Like other songs in the collection, they are composed in a language that is probably best identified as Old Bengali,[15] and in a style that derives its coherence not so much from syllable counts — which are quite irregular — as from the end-rhymes that link the couplets into which each verse is divided. Specifications in early manuscripts as to the *rāga* appropriate for each song, combined with our general knowledge of the authors' milieu, makes it virtually certain that the *caryāgīti* originally were sung. As celebrations of and exhortations to enlightenment, they were, quite literally, 'performance songs' — performed for audiences and, presumably, inspiring them to performance of actions that might lead them to liberation.

Three of Kāṇha's songs (*Caryāgītikośa* nos 10, 18, 19) have as a central topic his relation to a Ḍombī, a common term for a basket-seller, whose occupation marks her as a member of one of the lowest castes. The three songs are as follows[16]:

[10] Outside of town, O Ḍombī, is your hut;
Touching you and touching some more, the brahmin boys go.
Hey Ḍombī! I shall join with you,
Naked Kāṇha, the shameless skull-bearer.
The lotus is one, its petals sixty-four;
Atop it, the Ḍombī dances with poor [Kāṇha].
Hey Ḍombī! I ask you truly:
In whose boat, O Ḍombī, do you come and go?
Strings you sell, O Ḍombī, and also baskets;
For you, I have given up the actor's stage.
You are a Ḍombī, and I a skull-bearer;
For you, I have donned a garland of bones.
Subduing the pond, the Ḍombī eats lotus roots;
I kill you, Ḍombī, I take your life!

[18] Easily, I stopped the triple world;
Sleeping, I sported in great bliss.
Hey, Ḍombī, how goes your flirting?
The noble is outside, the skull-bearer is within.

O Ḍombī, you have spoiled everything;
To no avail, the moon has been polluted.
This one and that may demean you;
But the wise don't relinquish your neck.
Kāṇha sings of the erotic Caṇḍalī;
Than the Ḍombī, there is no better whore.

[19] World and nirvāṇa are tabor and drum,
Mind and winds are flute and cymbal.
'Victory, victory!' — sounds the kettledrum;
Kāṇha sets out to marry the Ḍombī.
He marries the Ḍombī, the feast is consumed;
The highest Dharma is the dowry.
Day and night pass in erotic play;
In a blaze of yoginīs, night becomes dawn.
Those who enjoy the Ḍombī's embrace
Won't leave her for an instant — they're drunk on
Simultaneity.

What are we to make of all this? In particular, given the focus of this essay, how are we to read Kāṇha's references to his sexual relationship to the Ḍombī? It is to the variant ways in which we might interpret the sexually references in Kāṇha's songs that we will turn next.

III. Interpretations

The question of interpretation is one that all religious traditions face. Religious 'texts' — whether spoken or written — most often originate at the ambiguous intersection of the secular and sacred worlds. Since they have as one of their purposes the linking of these worlds, religious texts — especially those of expressive power and aesthetic subtlety — generally have built into them double references, whether deliberate or unintended. Thus, even in their own time and milieu, religious texts may be understood in different ways by different audiences. The situation is compounded when the texts are interpreted by audiences in different times or cultures. It may be that it is precisely, and only, because they are ambiguous that religious texts can become 'classics', but the ambiguity that assures their greatness also makes their comprehension by both scholars and practitioners a vexing matter at best.

The general problematic affecting the interpretation of religious texts is encountered in a particularly acute form when we seek to interpret tantric texts. Tantra is, by and large, an esoteric tradition, requiring that its practitioners receive initiation (*abhiṣeka*) from a qualified guru. Buddhist theoreticians in both India and Tibet have insisted that tantric texts are written in a kind of code, referred to as 'international language' [or, alternatively, 'twilight language'

(*sandhyābhāṣa*)], which only can be read properly by those who are initiates. The ambiguity of tantric texts thus is deliberate. Evocative but obscure, the texts may be taken by the uninitiated as general expressions of religious or social sentiment, but cannot be understood in their true purport. For initiates, the texts may have an aesthetic appeal, but this is subordinate to their primary function, which is to serve as a key to yogic practice.

Thus, tantric tradition has insisted that, yes, its texts are difficult to understand, and this is as it ought to be. As a result, a modern scholar trying to make sense of tantric texts must first be able to read the code in which they are written. This is problematic, of course, because it is very difficult to read the texts without being initiated, while for an initiate to reveal or analyse publicly the true meanings of the texts may be a violation of her vows of secrecy. Further, even if we accept that interpretation is possible without initiation, there remains the problem of which interpretive scheme to apply: the concept of 'intentional language' covers a multitude of hermeneutical systems, themselves based in differing traditions of tantric practice and exegesis.[17] There is a further problem, however, for the very notion that tantric texts are written in code, while widely accepted, is itself to some degree an *a posteriori* theoretical assumption. In other words, tantric theories of interpretation are themselves interpretations, often unwarranted by the texts that are to be interpreted. Thus, a modern scholar also must be sensitive to the possibilities that (a) no interpretive scheme available truly captures the text's meaning and, more radically, (b) that *perhaps* interpretation itself was not intended and is not needed.

When we turn back to Kāṇha, therefore, we must try to do so with an awareness that while a 'figurative' reading is possible and perhaps even preferable, a literal reading cannot be ruled out *a priori*. Indeed, as we examine some of the ways in which Kāṇha's sexual references may be interpreted, we will see that the distinction between 'literal' and 'figurative' begins to lose some of its clarity. At the same time, and more centrally, our analysis also will reveal that our sense of what 'sexuality' itself is may be thrown into some doubt by Kāṇha's songs, especially in relation to the ways of life pursued by 'mystics'.

In his pioneering study of the Bengali 'Sahajiyā' tradition, S. B. Dasgupta observes that the 'performance-song' tradition is marked by three major religious characteristics: (1) the spirit of protest and criticism, (2) aversion to recondite scholarship and (3) scathing criticism of the formalities of life and religion.[18] And, indeed, if we read Kāṇha's songs literally, it is easy to see him as a radically iconoclastic figure, who, in Lee Siegel's description, 'renounced his family, smeared his body with ashes, [took up] with a low-class woman . . . frequented cremation grounds, and indulged in violently orgiastic rites',[19] in order, as Stephan Beyer puts it, to 'tear aside the veils of accumulated custom that hide us from our authentic and joyful mode of being in the world'.[20] This Kāṇha — or 'Bengal Blackie', as Siegel dubs him — has only a tenuous relation to mainstream Vajrayāna Buddhism. He may use some terms, such as 'voidness' (*śūnyatā*), nirvāṇa or Simultaneity (*sahaja*), that have Buddhist doctrinal over-

tones, but is unschooled in philosophical dogmas. He is far more interested in criticizing social and religious convention while celebrating his own idiosyncratic life-style than in propounding a system of thought — or even, perhaps, a system of yoga.[21] Therefore, Kāṇha's references to his sexual relationship with a Ḍombī must be taken as accurate reports of the kind of life that he lived: spontaneous, unconventional, uninhibited. He may have been interested in spiritual liberation, but felt that, in the words of Blake, '[t]he road of excess leads to the palace of wisdom'. Thus, sex was not only a legitimate pursuit for a mystic, but might serve as a vehicle for his or her enlightenment.[22]

The problem with interpreting Kāṇha solely on a literal level, however, is that a straightforward reading of the songs yields too many ideas and images that seem to point beyond themselves. Not only are there overt references to such Buddhist concepts as Dharma, saṃsāra, nirvāṇa, and the tantric coupling of mind and *prāṇa*, but any number of images in the songs, including the sixty-four petalled lotus, the boat, and the moon, had acquired, by Kāṇha's time, well-established symbolic connotations.[23] Read straightforwardly, these images do not cohere much with the narrative of the songs, so if they are *not* taken symbolically, we end up seeing Kāṇha as an 11th century surrealist — an anachronistic projection, certainly. If some of the songs' images are symbolic, it does not require a great logical leap to conclude that everything in the songs is symbolic: they are allegories for some kind of inner experience. In this view, Kāṇha is not reporting on his life-style at all; rather, he is presenting a highly encoded account of inner yogic practices that are followed by initiates into the Vajrayāna, of whom he is one. This certainly is the way he is read by his commentator, Munidatta.[24] Reginald Ray, in criticizing Siegel's analysis of 'Bengal Blackie', maintains that we must not read Kāṇha 'in a purely naive or literal fashion, as if the Vajrayāna were saying that by indiscriminately indulging in sexual passion and breaking social or religious conventions, liberation might somehow be attained'.[25] Rather, Ray insists, we must understand that sexual imagery in the tantras is a way of (a) expressing the bipolarity of the enlightenment experience, where gnosis and great bliss are conjoined and (b) pointing out that all aspects of the world, including the basest passions, are inherently pure, and not to be regarded as different from enlightenment.[26] Thus, Kāṇha's references to his sexual relationship with the Ḍombī cannot be taken literally. The Ḍombī, like the Caṇḍalī, the yoginī, the ḍākiṇī — or, for that matter, any female mentioned in Buddhist tantric literature — is simply a symbol for wisdom, which has been considered 'female' since well-before the tantric period; witness the personification as a goddess of the perfection of wisdom, Prajñāpāramitā. So, when Kāṇha sings of making love to the Ḍombī he is simply speaking in an evocative manner of his 'embrace' of wisdom, his understanding of the voidness that is the nature of all things, the 'empty' womb that is the source of all dharmas (*dharmodaya*).[27] If the female symbolizes wisdom and its object, voidness, the male is a symbol for the compassionate methods that must be conjoined with wisdom on any Mahāyāna path. Kāṇha himself confirms this in the first verse of song

no. 13, where he says: 'My body is compassion, voidness is my woman'.[28] In short, to speak of sexual intercourse may really be to speak of the joining of wisdom and method — or, in a tantric context, gnosis and bliss — in the yogi's mind, without any necessary external referent.

A symbolic interpretation of Kāṇha's songs certainly places him back in the mainstream of Buddhist thought, but if they are read as strictly symbolic, then an important historical fact is ignored: there definitely have been, at various times and places, tantric practices that did involve the performance of ritualized sexual intercourse. Even if the countless references to such practices in texts of the Highest Yoga Tantra-class are dismissed as symbolic — a reading that requires considerable hermeneutical ingenuity — and even if past or present claims by some Tibetan masters to have engaged in such practices are dismissed as anecdotal, it seems difficult to gainsay the evidence of such Tibetan tantric commentators as Tsong kha pa (1357–1419), who though himself a celibate monk, reports nevertheless that if one hopes to attain enlightenment in this lifetime, one must utilize an actual physical consort, an 'Action Seal' (*karmamudrā*), on the completion stage of the Highest Yoga Tantra.[29] If one merely uses a visualized consort, a 'Knowledge Seal' (*jñānamudrā*) — as a monk must — then enlightenment must await one's death.[30] It seems highly unlikely that Tsong kha pa would fabricate an account of the tantric tradition that diminishes his own and his fellow monks' chances for speedy enlightenment, so it probably is safe to assume that his report of the existence of sexual practices is accurate. In this way of understanding sexual references, then, there is a literal component, so when Kāṇha refers to sexual intercourse with the Ḍombī he is referring to an actual physical event. The reference to sex may be literal, but its depiction or interpretation as 'orgiastic' is misleading, since it actually is part of an advanced yogic ritual that requires considerable discipline and concentration.

Still, it may be insisted, even if ritualized tantric sexual practices are far from wanton, they nevertheless entail a sort of consecration of the body and sexuality, with the consequence that pleasure — including sexual pleasure — is neither demeaned nor suppressed on the tantric path. Further, the imaginatively ritualized sexuality of tantra may provide both a means and a model for understanding how men and women might relate to each other without ego, regarding each other as divine.[31] The difficulty with this view is that an analysis of the prerequisites and procedures of ritualized sexuality reveals that neither sexual pleasure nor the male–female 'relationship' as generally understood seem to play much of a part. In the view of Tsong kha pa and others of his school, who reflect a considerable body of Indian and Tibetan opinion, a physical consort, an Action Seal, is required at the 'isolated mind' stage of the completion stage of Highest Yoga Tantra practice,[32] for the specific purpose of inducing one's mind and *prāṇa* (vital energies) to enter the indestructible drop at one's heart *cakra*.[33] The purification of the very subtle mind and *prāṇa* within that drop is the basis for the actual transformation of oneself into a Buddha. The Action Seal must be a tantric practitioner, but the texts do not specify unambiguously that she (or he —

though almost all texts are written from the male point of view) must be someone one knows well, or that she must be as advanced a practitioner as oneself. Thus, the element of complete mutuality, or 'relationship', does not seem central to one's interaction with an Action Seal: if anything, the Action Seal is described instrumentally — though, again, this need not preclude 'relationship' in our sense of the term.

More importantly — indeed, this is central to my essay — when ritualized sexuality is enacted with an Action Seal, the presuppositions and purposes involved all militate against the view that what is going on is 'sex' as we generally understand that term. To begin with, ordinary sexual activity presupposes sexual desire, but from the Vajrayāna point of view, one cannot possibly have reached the completion stage of Highest Yoga Tantra without immense effort and discipline. Indeed, one must have tamed one's mind and one's desires to an extraordinary degree. Thus, paradoxically, in order to engage in tantric sexual practices, one needs effectively to have overcome ordinary — i.e. craving-based — sexual desire, though of course one still has a sexual identity and sexual impulses, and could not practise tantra without them. Further, whereas ordinary sexual activity has as an important component — if not as its sole purpose — the attainment of climax, or orgasm,[34] tantric practices almost always involve what is called 'the retention of semen'. Thus, while tantric sexual practices may arouse sexual energy or impulses, those impulses are not to be released cathartically, but rechannelled, or sublimated. In terms of the subtle body in which completion-stage practices are carried out, sexual impulses are to be directed not downward from the crown *cakra* and outward from the genital *cakra* (their natural direction) but turned back inward and upward, where they may be utilized for various yogic purposes — in the case we are considering, it is the forcing of mind and *prāṇa* into the very centre of the heart *cakra*, where reside the subtle mind and *prāṇa* that are the basis of our mental and physical being and the true source of bondage and liberation.

If, thus, ritualized tantric sexuality has little to do with a 'personal relationship', presupposes a mastery of sexual desire, and has as its purpose not the release of sexual energy but its sublimation, we seem to have encountered a phenomenon that may actually be less a form of 'eroticism' or 'sexuality' than of asceticism. If the physical act of sexual intercourse may be involved, but the relationship, desire and cathartic pleasure that for most of us are entailed by sexuality in a positive sense are missing, then is it really 'sex'? The question is difficult to answer, assuming as it does that 'sex' has a clear definition, but the point should be clear: even if Kāṇha is referring to actual sexual practices with the Ḍombī, what is occurring psychologically and physiologically in those practices bears very little resemblance to sex as we generally understand it, since Buddhist tantric assumptions and aims are virtually indistinguishable from those of traditions more readily recognized as 'ascetic'. Thus, when Kāṇha sings of sex with the Ḍombī, he may ultimately be referring to his pursuit not of erotic bliss, but of an ascetic path.

IV. Summary, self-criticism and concluding remarks

To summarize, an analysis of the sexual imagery in the performance-songs of Kāṇha reveals at least four levels of interpretation: (1) literal, where sexuality is overt, unashamed and unsublimated, (2) symbolic, where the surface sexuality is a metaphor for certain standard Buddhist meditative achievements, (3) 'higher' literal, where symbolized meditative achievements are actualized by ritual sexuality and (4) yogic, where sexual rites are revealed to entail sublimation rather than indulgence, asceticism rather than eroticism. Thus, though the presence of sexual practices in tantra — whether physically or, imaginatively performed — may refute the idea that celibacy is crucial to mysticism, it does not necessarily undermine the contention that chastity and asceticism are required on the mystical path.

At least two objections may legitimately be raised against my argument. The first is that I have ignored an important component of the experience of enlightenment in tantric Buddhism, namely the 'great bliss' (*mahāsukha*) that is a simultaneous component of the mind that realizes the void nature of all phenomena. This may not be sexual pleasure as generally understood, and need not result from ritual sexuality, but it clearly is *modelled* on ordinary sexual pleasure and, more importantly, makes explicit the fact that pleasure is a vital component of tantric enlightenment. If this is the case, then, to describe the tradition's purposes as 'ascetic' seems misleading. Thus, Kāṇha may not be describing ordinary sexual bliss, but neither is he describing a state that is beyond all pleasure: indeed, he is describing the highest of all pleasures, that of enlightenment. A possible reply to this objection is that many unquestionably ascetic traditions have as their *goal* a notion of supreme pleasure, even if their procedures entail the denial or sublimation of pleasure. Thus, Patañjali's eight-fold yoga, or Orthodox hesychasm, or much of Catholic contemplative life may involve self-denial, but what is won through that denial is something immeasurably sweet, beyond any earthly pleasure that can be known or imagined (cf. *inter alia*, Teresa of Avila). If it is argued that it is not only the tantric goal, but the path, too, that involves bliss, it may be pointed out that these other traditions also describe sublime pleasures, or 'consolations' along the way, without thereby ceasing to be 'ascetic'. Further, the specific employment of a version of *sexual* bliss in tantric traditions is not for sexual pleasure *per se*, but for the purpose of concentrating the mind and manifesting the subtlest levels of consciousness, the transformation of which is the goal of tantric practice. Thus, the only difference between tantra and these ascetic disciplines may be the presence in the former — almost as a mere technicality — of some practices that involve sexual intercourse.

A second objection that might reasonably be made is more historical and hermeneutical. Have I not assumed, in my presentation of the four levels of interpretation of Kāṇha's songs, that each view is higher than the one that precedes it, and the final, 'yogic' view is highest of all, and therefore Kāṇha's 'true purport'? Have I not ignored the fact that these four levels of interpretation — if

they are valid at all — may be related in ways other than successive sublation? After all, from a historical standpoint, it is likely that each of the four has been privileged at some time by some tantric practitioners. Certainly, there have been hedonists who have read tantric sexual references quite literally, puritans who have interpreted them as purely symbolic, and still others who have seen them as celebrations of the body and a refined sexuality. Kāṇha himself is silent on how his verses are to be read, so what basis have we for privileging one interpretation over another? Further, is it not possible that more than one level of interpretation may apply simultaneously? Perhaps all four interpretations express elements of Kāṇha's 'true purport', in a non-hierarchical manner. This would seem appropriate in light of the multivalence I earlier assigned to religious texts in general and tantric literature in particular. To these objections, I would reply only that if we accept a multivalent interpretation of Kāṇha, then the 'yogic' interpretation reflects at least *part* of what he is denoting in his songs. If this is so, then asceticism plays *some* role in his life, so his sexual references must be ambiguous. And, if I have convinced the reader only of the fact that 'tantric sex' may not be quite what it appears, and that tantra should not therefore be branded too quickly as 'sexual mysticism', then my essay will have achieved its objective.

Finally, I want to note briefly a number of larger issues — the proverbial 'areas for further study' — that emerge from these considerations. The first is comparative: it seems to me that there is a considerable similarity between the 'ambiguous sexuality' we have uncovered in the Buddhist tantras and a similar ambivalence found in the mythology and imagery of Śiva — expecially that of the liṅgam, the phallus, which may symbolize either eros or ascesis, depending on how it is interpreted.[35] Among non-Indian traditions, esoteric Taoism employs sexual imagery in a way strikingly similar to that of the Buddhist tantras; in Taoism, too, sublimation appears to be an important element of 'yoga', so sexual references there also seem to be ambiguous.[36] Evidence of an ascetic purport to sexual references in either of these traditions would help to support my contention regarding Buddhist tantra. The second issue is philosophical: I have indicated that I think that the term 'sex' ought to be applied to tantric Action Seal practices with considerable caution. Some investigation of 'the philosophy of sex' might help to clarify the issues involved. For example, philosophers of sex in the analytic tradition have argued over whether sex ought to be defined in a 'reductionist' manner as 'skin on skin' or in an 'expansionist' manner as requiring a concern with another person.[37] If the former is accepted, then perhaps tantric practices may be defined as truly 'sexual'; if the latter is accepted, then their status as 'sexual' is more ambiguous. The third issue is psycho-social: it might be interesting to consider the place of the 'person' in tantric sexual practices. Philosophical issues of no-self aside, there is an 'other' who serves as consort in the tantric tradition. Is the consort a 'fully equal partner'? A 'mere instrument'? Some combination of the two? Can the relation between practitioner and consort be illuminated by Foucault's analysis of sex as power,[38] or might it serve as a counter-example that brings his thesis into

question? The final issue is gender-based: can the images of sexuality developed in the tantric tradition be seen as transcending particular gender identities — after all, males may visualize themselves as female deities in union with male deities, and vice versa — or, given their cultural heritage, are they derived from an androcentric understanding of the nature of sexuality and gender that might run contrary to female experience? Might females have developed Tantra differently, or, for that matter, might they have contributed to its development? Do the reports of female practitioners reflect values not found in male practitioners' accounts, or do they reflect instead the internalization of a standard style of 'tantric' discourse itself developed primarily by males? The answers to these and the other questions I have just posed go considerably beyond my present scope and competence, and will have to await another time, or another voice.

Notes

1 This essay originally was presented at the annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion, New Orleans, Louisiana, November, 1990.

2 I take the four technical terms employed in this paragraph as follows: 'mysticism' is any practice that aims at the most direct identification with ultimate reality of which a human being is considered capable; 'celibacy' is the avoidance of sexual intercourse; 'chastity' is the limitation of sexual activity to the most conservative limits prescribed by a tradition; and 'asceticism' is the denial of ordinary pleasures for the purpose of attaining an extraordinary goal.

3 E.g. Yukei Matsunaga (ed.), *The Guhyasamāja Tantra: A New Critical Edition*, Osaka, Toho Shuppan 1978, p.4; D. L. Snellgrove, *The Hevajra Tantra: Sanskrit text, Tibetan texts and English rendering*, 2 vols, London, Oxford University Press 1959, vol. II, p.2.

4 The Sanskrit is *evaṃ mayā śrutam/ekasmin samaye bhagavān sarvatathāgatakāyavāk-cittahṛdayavajrayoṣidbhageṣu vijahāra*. Alternative, somewhat bowdlerized translations include that of Snellgrove: 'Thus have I heard — at one time the Lord dwelt in bliss with the Vajrayoginī who is the Body, Speech and Mind of all the Buddhas' (op. cit., vol. I, p.47; but cf. his *Indo-Tibetan Buddhism*, Boston, MA, Shambhala 1987, vol. I, p. 121); and Dasgupta: 'It is heard by me that once upon a time, the Lord sported in the heart of super-human knowledge arising out of the body, speech and mind of all the Tathāgatas', see S. B. Dasgupta, *An Introduction to Tantric Buddhism*, 3rd Edn, rpt., Calcutta, University of Calcutta 1974, p. 120. The crucial phrase here is *yoṣidbhageṣu*. *Yoṣit* is, unambiguously, a woman; *bhaga* may mean a number of things, including fortune, beauty, loveliness, and 'amorous sport'. It also means the vulva or vagina, and used with *yoṣit*, denotes this. On the issue of bowdlerization in tantra translation, see John Ronald Newman, *The Outer Wheel of Time: Vajrayāna Buddhist Cosmology in the Kālacakra Tantra*, Dissertation, University of Wisconsin-Madison 1987, Ann Arbor, UMI 1987, pp. 30–1 and note 5.

5 Michael M. Broido, 'Killing, lying, stealing, and adultery: a problem of interpretation in the tantras', in Donald S. Lopez, Jr (ed.), *Buddhist Hermeneutics*, Honolulu, University of Hawaii Press 1988, pp. 71–118.

6 Snellgrove, *Indo-Tibetan Buddhism*, vol. I, pp. 255–62; and C. S. George, *The Caṇḍamahāroṣaṇatantra*, chapters I–VIII. Sanskrit and Tibetan texts with English translation, New Haven, Oriental Society 1974, *passim*.

7 See Keith Dowman, *Masters of Mahamudra: Songs and Histories of the Eighty-Four Siddhas*, Albany, NY, State University of New York Press 1985, pp. 130–1.

8 As Dowman notes (p. 130), Kāṇha also figures in the lineage of the Hindu *nāth* tradition; a number of figures are common to both lists.

9 See Abhayadatta, *Buddha's Lions: The Lives of the Eighty-Four Siddhas*, translated by James B. Robinson, Berkeley, CA, Dharma Publishing 1979, pp. 81–5; and Dowman, pp. 123–31.

10 E. Obermiller (translator), *The History of Buddhism in India and Tibet by Buston*, rpt. Delhi, Sri Satguru Publications 1986, p. 120.

11 Tāranātha, *Tāranātha's History of Buddhism in India*, translated by Lama Chimpa and Alaka Chattopadhyaya, (ed.) Debiprasad Chattopadhyaya, Simla, Indian Institute of Advanced Study 1970, *passim* and pp. 412–3.

12 Ibid., p. 249.

13 Ibid., p. 268.

14 For a fuller discussion of these issues, see Snellgrove, *The Hevajra Tantra*, vol. I, p. 13, note 4. According to him, the linguistic evidence of the *caryāgīti* would seem to place them no earlier than the 11th century.

15 See Per Kvaerne, *An Anthology of Buddhist Tantric Songs: A Study of the Caryāgīti*, Oslo-Bergen-Tromso, Universitetsforlaget 1977, pp. 3–4.

16 The translations are mine, though I am much indebted to Kvaerne (pp. 113, 150, 155) and Stephan Beyer, *The Buddhist Experience: Sources and Interpretations*, Belmont, CA, Dickenson 1974, pp. 259–60. For alternative translations of all three songs, see M. Shahidullah (ed. and translator), *Les chants mystiques de Kāṇha et Saraha: Les Dohā-koṣa et les Caryā*, Paris, Adrien-Maisonneuve 1928, pp. 117, 119–20. For nos 10 and 18, see S. B. Dasgupta, *Obscure Religious Cults*, rpt., Calcutta, Firma KLM Private Limited 1976, pp. 103–5. For a strikingly different version of no. 10, see Lee Siegel, 'Bengal Blackie and the Sacred Slut: a Sahajayāna buddhist song', *Buddhist-Christian Studies* 1 (1988), pp. 51–2.

17 For discussions of these hermeneutical traditions, which include a tantric version of the earlier Buddhist distinction between 'interpretable' (*neyārtha*) and 'direct' (*nītārtha*) teachings, and the system of 'seven ornaments' developed in the Guhyasamāja exegetical tradition, see e.g. Ernst Steinkellner, 'Remarks on Tantric Hermeneutics', in L. Ligeti (ed.), *Proceedings of the 1976 Ksoma de Körös Symposium*, Biblioteca Orientalia Hungarica no. 23, Budapest, 1978, pp. 445–58; Michael M. Broido, 'Does Tibetan Hermeneutics throw any light on *Sandhābhāṣa*?' *Journal of the Tibet Society* 2 (1982), pp. 5–39; Broido, '*bshad-thabs*: Some Tibetan methods of explaining the tantras', in Ernst Steinkellner and H. Tauscher (eds), *Proceedings of the 1981 Ksoma de Körös Symposium*, Vienna, Wiener Studien zur Tibetologie und Buddhismuskunde; Broido, 'Killing, lying, stealing, and adultery'; and Robert A. F. Thurman, 'Vajra Hermeneutics', in Donald S. Lopez, Jr (ed.), *Buddhist Hermeneutics*, Honolulu, University of Hawaii Press 1988, pp. 119–48.

18 Dasgupta, *Obscure Religious Cults*, pp. 51–61.

19 Lee Siegel, 'Bengal Blackie rides again', *Buddhist-Christian Studies* 5 (1985), pp. 191–2.

20 Beyer, p. 258.

21 See Agehananda Bharati, *The Tantric Tradition*, Garden City, NY/Doubleday 1970, pp. 29–30.

22 For the most recent exposition of this view, see John Stevens, *Lust for Enlightenment: Buddhism and Sex*, Boston, MA, Shambhala 1990, especially pp. 60–80. Stevens cites with gusto a wide range of Indian and Tibetan tantric texts (he excludes Kāṇha), but shows only a limited awareness of readings of them beyond the literal level.

23 In pre-tantric Buddhism, the lotus is a symbol of purity; the sixty-four petalled lotus refers in tantra to the *cakra* — at the intersection of sixty-four subtle-body channels — located near the navel; it is the site of the 'red drop', inherited from one's mother,

that is associated with what is sometimes called 'psychic heat'. In pre-tantric Buddhism, the boat can symbolize the path to nirvāṇa or the human body (whose passengers are the four 'mental aggregates', sensation, perception, formations and consciousness); in tantra, the boat may refer, among other things, to the 'mind of enlightenment' (*bodhicitta*), which is not, as in pre-tantric Mahāyāna, so much an altruistic attitude, but the white seminal drop inherited from the father, that is located at the crown *cakra* and is associated with bliss. In pre-tantric Buddhism, the moon is a symbol of *bodhicitta* as the altruistic aspiration to enlightenment; in the tantric tradition, as noted, it is the 'white drop'. On the homologies among compassion, the 'mind of enlightenment' and 'orgasmic bliss', see Jeffrey Hopkins, 'Tantric Buddhism, degeneration or enhancement: the viewpoint of a Tibetan tradition', *Buddhist-Christian Studies* 10 (1990), p. 91ff.

24 Munidatta's commentary is edited and translated by Kvaerne, op. cit.

25 Reginald Ray, 'A reassessment of Bengal Blackie', *Buddhist-Christian Studies* 5 (1985), p. 184.

26 Ibid., pp. 184–5.

27 Voidness is the source of all dharmas not in a substantial cosmogonic sense (though clearly the imagery of cosmogony is invoked), but in the sense that because there is no inherent existence anywhere, phenomena can change or come to be; if phenomema existed substantially, there could be no change, no coming to be of what has not yet arisen. Voidness, thus, is the condition for the possibility of dharmas; see Nāgārjuna's *Madhyamakakārikā*, chapter 24, for the classic source of this idea. The equation of the female with the wisdom realizing voidness is most explicit in the naming of the consort of the tantric deity Hevajra: Nairātmyā, which means 'no-self', and, by extension, voidness.

28 Kvaerne, p. 127; Beyer, p. 260.

29 According to Tsong kha pa and the dGe lugs tradition of which he was founder, Highest Yoga Tantra (*anuttara-yoga-tantra*) is the highest of the four classes of tantric practice (the others are Action (*kriyā*), Performance (*caryā*) and Yoga Tantra), and the only class through which fully enlightened Buddhahood can be achieved. Highest Yoga Tantra is divided into a generation stage (*utpattikrama*), on which 'ordinary apearances' are overcome through imaginative transformation of oneself into a Buddha, one's speech into mantra, one's environment into a maṇḍala, etc. The completion stage (*saṃpannakrama*), at the culmination of which Buddhahood actually is achieved, involves working in the subtle body to transform one's body into a divine body and one's mind into the omniscient consciousness of a Buddha — equivalent to the Form and Dharma bodies of a fully enlightened being.

30 See e.g. Daniel Cozort, *Highest Yoga Tantra*, Ithaca, NY, Snow Lion 1986, p. 88; Geshe Kelsang Gyatso, *Clear Light of Bliss: Mahamudra in Vajrayana Buddhism*, London, Wisdom Publications 1982, pp. 126–9. The use of visualized consorts by *physically* celibate individuals like Tsong kha pa and Milarepa raises interesting questions about the limits of the concept of 'celibacy', though we cannot explore them here.

31 See e.g. Herbert V. Guenther, *The Tantric View of Life*, Boulder and London, Shambhala 1976, p. 62ff. Subtle scholar that he is, Guenther is of course aware of a variety of possible readings. However, in this particular section, he does stress the way in which tantric images of sexuality evoke the possibility of human 'love' relationships that transcend either prudery or power. Thus, he reads a passage from Kāṇha's *Dohākośa*, no. 29, (Bengali: *to biṇu taruṇi nirantara nehe/bohi ki lābhaï ena bi dehe*; Tibetan: *gzhon num dang rtag tu mdza' bde med na/lus'di yis ni byang chub ji ltar 'grub* (cf. Shahidullah, p. 81)] as follows: 'How can enlightenment be attained in this bodily existence/Without thine incessant *love*, o lovely young girl' (Guenther, p. 66;

emphasis mine). The crucial term here is *nehe*, from *neha*, for the Sanskrit *sneha*, which has a wide range of meanings, from 'affection', to 'friendship', to 'desire', to 'lust'. Particularly in Buddhism, its connotations are by no means always positive, and Guenther's translation of it by 'love' would seem, at the very least, to limit the term's ambiguity — particularly by downplaying the sexual connotations it sometimes has.

32 The completion stage of Highest Yoga Tantra is generally divided by the dGe lugs pas into five sub-stages: (1) isolated speech, where one's mental and physical energies are drawn into the central channel of the subtle body, (2) isolated mind, where the energies are drawn into the heart *cakra* and one undergoes a series of visions like those at the time of death, culminating in the clear light vision, which at this point is a metaphoric equivalent of the realization of voidness, (3) illusory body, where, on the basis of the metaphoric clear light realization of voidness, one generates from subtle physical energies an unpurified image of the Buddha-body one will possess upon enlightenment, (4) clear light, where one directly realizes the void nature of all phenomena and (5) union, where, having utterly purified the illusory body through the clear light realization, one joins the two inextricably together to achieve the Form and Dharma bodies of a fully enlightened Buddha. For the clearest account of this process in English, see Cozort.

33 The Action Seal is *required* at this stage if one is to attain enlightenment in this lifetime. The Seal *may* be used at the outset of the completion stage, to help draw one's mind and *prāṇa* into the central channel of the subtle body (Gyatso, p. 126; cf. previous note.) Hopkins gives a clear explanation of the rationale for this: 'Because the more subtle levels of consciousness are considered to be more powerful and thus more effective in realizing the truth of the emptiness of inherent existence, the systems of Highest Yoga Tantra seek to manifest the mind of clear light by way of various techniques. One of these techniques is blissful orgasm because, according to the psychology of Highest Yoga Tantra, orgasm — like dying, going to sleep, and fainting — involves the ceasing of the grosser levels of consciousness and manifestation of the more subtle. The intent in using a blissful, orgasmic mind in the path is to manifest the most subtle mind — that of clear light — and use it to realize the emptiness of inherent existence. ... A consciousness of orgasmic bliss is used because, when the sense of pleasure is powerful, one's consciousness is totally involved with that pleasure and thus completely withdrawn; this is why the subtler levels of consciousness manifest during the intense bliss of orgasm, even if they are not noticed, never mind realized, in common copulation. Without desire, the involvement in the bliss consciousness would be minimal, and thus Highest Yoga Tantra makes use of the arts of love-making, and so forth, to enhance the process' (p. 95).

34 Note that I am using the term 'orgasm' differently than does Hopkins: in my usage, it entails 'seminal release'; in his (see previous note), it does not.

35 See Wendy Doniger O'Flaherty, *Asceticism and Eroticism in the Mythology of Śiva*, London, Oxford University Press 1973.

36 See e.g. John Blofeld, *Taoism: The Road to Immortality*, Boulder, CO, Shambhala 1978, especially chapter 8.

37 See Alan Soble, 'An introduction to the philosophy of sex', in Alan Soble (ed.), *The Philosophy of Sex: Contemporary Readings*, Totowa, NJ, Rowman and Little-field 1980, pp. 1–56.

38 Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality. vol. 1: An Introduction*, translated by Robert Hurley, New York, Pantheon 1978.

78

ON THE CONCEPT OF SAHAJA IN INDIAN BUDDHIST TANTRIC LITERATURE

Per Kvaerne

Source: *Temenos* XI (1975): 88–135.

The importance of the term *sahaja* in tantric Buddhist thought has long been recognized – in fact, certain scholars, apparently without textual justification, have introduced the term *Sahajayāna*, as if there were a particular *yāna* within tantric Buddhism characterized solely or at least chiefly by its dependence on the concept of sahaja[1]. Likewise we find expressions like "the Buddhist Sahajiyā cult", "Sahajiyā Buddhists" etc. – presumably due to confusion with the term sahajiyā used in connection with the Vaishnava sahajiyā movement in Bengal[2].

While the concept of sahaja certainly is not limited to any particular yanā within tantric Buddhism – as we shall see, it is frequently found in a basic tantra like the *Hevajratantra* (HVT), and is, moreover, identical with many other concepts, like mahāsukha ("Great Bliss"), tattva ("the Essence"), samarasa ("Sameness of Flavour") etc. – there can be no doubt as to its fundamental importance. However, this basic concept of tantric Buddhism has not, to the best of my knowledge, been studied in a systematic way[3].

Sahaja literally signifies "being born (*-ja*) together with (*saha-*)". The Tibetan *lhan-čig skyes-pa*, followed by the Mongolian *qamtu törügsen*, faithfully renders this. Frequently this basic meaning is expanded to include "congenital, innate, hereditary, original", hence also "natural". Translations of sahaja have tended to be based on these derived senses; thus, to quote but two examples, Shahidullah rendered it "l'Inné"[4] followed by Snellgrove "the Innate"[5]. While this translation is etymologically sound, and doubtlessly expresses an important aspect of sahaja, it nevertheless has the disadvantage of suggesting that sahaja is purely subjective or in some sense individual, that it is something like a hidden "divine spark" in the depths of man. Such at least are the associations which would seem most readily to present themselves. M. Eliade has suggested another translation, "le non-conditionné"[6]; while certainly correct as far as it goes, this, too, is unsatisfactory as it seems to lay exclusive stress on the transcendent nature of sahaja.

In a work now in the press, An Anthology of Buddhist Tantric Songs. A Study of the Caryāgīti, I adopted the translation suggested by H. Guenther[7], and I shall repeat here his explanation: "The literal translation of the Tibetan term *lhan-čig skyes-pa* (Sanskrit *sahaja*) would be "co-emergence" . . . Essentially it refers to the spontaneity and totality of the experience in which the opposites such as transcendence and immanence, subject and object, the noumenal and phenomenal indivisibly blend". – I still believe that Guenther has succeeded in giving a correct description of the *implications* of the term sahaja. However, his translation must, I think, be modified to "co-emergent". i.e. to an adjective, as I doubt whether sahaja is ever used – as far as Buddhist tantric texts are concerned – as a noun[8], except as short-hand for sahajānanda, sahajajñāna etc., terms which will be discussed below. For the moment I shall limit myself to saying that I believe that "simultaneously-arisen" or the like is the most suitable translation[9], and (anticipating my conclusions) that the term sahaja is basically connected with the tantric ritual of consecration where it refers to the relation between the ultimate and the preliminary Joys.

A few words concerning the scope of the present essay will be in order. I intend to study the concept of sahaja as found in Indian Buddhist tantric texts. In other words, I shall not deal with the concept of sahaja as found in non-Buddhist sources, e.g. the writings of the Nāth-panthī yogins or the Sant poets. Nor will use be made of the vast body of Tibetan material, which includes translation of Sanskrit originals as well as an abundant exegetical literature – not because this material is unimportant, for it is, on the contrary, of inestimable value, but because any meaningful use of it would entail a long-term project. Consequently I shall limit myself to published Sanskrit (and Apabhraṃśa) sources – and they are, after all, sufficiently extensive to allow one to arrive at a certain number of conclusions, at least. The only exception will be the Fundamentals of the Buddhist Tantras (FBT) by mKhasgrub rje, which I use for the simple reason that it is readily available in Lessing and Wayman's edition and translation. When quoting this text, I retain the translation adopted in that edition. I likewise retain, whenever quoting from them, Snellgrove's translation of the HVT and George's translation of the *Caṇḍamahāroṣaṇatantra* (CMT). However, all other translations – from the *Pañcukrama* (PK), the *Advayavajrasaṃgraha* (AVS), the *Sekkodeśaṭikā* (ST), *Hevajrasekaprakriyā* (HSP), and other texts – are my own unless otherwise specified.

I. The tantric ritual of initiation

The important part played by *rituals* in the tantras is well known; indeed tantricism is frequently described as *ritualistic*, i.e. as based on the innate efficiency of external rituals properly performed. One need only glance through the most readily available Buddhist tantra, the *Hevajratantra*, to become convinced of this – page after page deal with rituals for producing rain, for destroying enemies, for gaining mastery over a young woman, and the like[10]. Not only the

attainment of wordly success depends on rituals. The progress of the adept towards Buddhahood, i.e. towards final liberation from the bonds of ignorance and powerlessness in the whirl of saṃsāra, is likewise at every stage intimately connected with ritual acts of one kind or another.

To this one may perhaps object that the *rupture de niveau*, the transfer to a higher plane of being to which the adept aspires, after all requires an internal *sādhana*, an interior process of realization in the form of certain meditational practices. But while perfectly true, this only serves to stress the ritualistic character of tantricism; for not only are the meditational excercises preceded by rituals, but even the interior sādhana itself proceeds according to a ritualistic pattern. In fact, external ritual and internal sādhana form an indistinguishable whole, and this unity finds its most pregnant expression in the form of the maṇḍala, the sacred enclosure consisting of concentric squares and circles drawn on the ground and representing that adamantine plane of being on which the aspirant to Buddhahood wishes to establish himself. The unfolding of the tantric ritual depends on the maṇḍala; and where a material maṇḍala is not employed, the adept proceeds to construct one mentally in the course of his meditation[11].

The form and function of the maṇḍala have been authoritatively described by G. Tucci[12], to whom the reader is referred. Here the following only will be stressed: the ritual of the maṇḍala, whether conceived of in internal or external terms, takes the form of a series of initiations, i.e. of ritual acts *par excellence*, serving to prepare the adept for the attainment of Buddhahood, the goal to which not only tantric, but indeed all Buddhism aspires. It will therefore be well to examine more closely the tantric ritual of initiation (*seka* or *abhiṣeka*). In this connection we have at our disposal three texts which give a relatively full and coherent account of the successive initiations, viz. the *Sekoddeśaṭīkā* (ST) of Nāḍapāda, edited by M. E. Carelli, the *Hevajrasekaprakriyā* (HSP), edited and translated by L. Finot, and the first eight chapters of the *Caṇḍamahāroṣaṇatantra* (CMT), edited and translated by C. S. George.

Before we proceed to examine these initiations, a brief discussion of the term *abhiṣeka* will be in order. It is derived from the root *sic-* "to pour out, sprinkle, soak". It is commonly used for the act of impregnation, and perhaps retains this connotation in those cases where the abhiṣeka involves a hieros gamos. Seka or abhiṣeka is thus basically an "aspersion", and this idea is never lost. "As externally one washes away exterior dirt with water, so one sprinkles water for the washing away of ignorance; it is thus called a sprinkling" (AVS p. 36)[13]. More concisely, HVT II.iii.12 states: "Thereby one is sprinkled, that is to say cleansed – hence the word *seka* is employed". Because of the sacred character of the aspersion, the word "baptism" has been used to translate seka[14]; however, as this term is obviously heavily loaded with Christian connotations, it does not seem quite suitable. Another reason for rejecting it, is that the various stages of abhiṣeka do not, in fact, always include aspersions; and if water is not employed, it seems rather inappropriate to speak of baptism. One might employ the term "initiation", as this is beyond doubt what the abhiṣeka in fact is[15]; but this has

the disadvantage of wholly obliterating the etymological meaning of the word, and is a very wide term covering all sorts of rites. The best translation would therefore seem to be "*consecration*" since there is explicit analogy with the rite of royal consecration, for which the term abhiṣeka is likewise used[16]. The term "coronation", however, must be rejected as stressing the associations between initiation and royal dominion to the exclusion of all other associations[17].

The consecrations to be conferred on the neophyte may be divided into two groups, the *minor* or *preparatory* consecrations, and the *major* or *final* ones, in ST styled "transcendent" (lokottara). We shall deal first with the minor consecrations.

The actual proceedings of the preliminary consecrations are described in detail in ST, and a resumé is given by Carelli (p. 32–33)[18]. We are thus dispensed from going over the same ground here.

For our purposes it will be sufficient to note that the consecrations take place inside the mandala, representing the sacred world which the neophyte is now entering, and that they consist, among other things, of a series of aspersions and recitations of mantras performed by the preceptor (guru) of the aspirant (śiṣya), thereby purifying him and elevating him in body, speech, and mind to that adamantine plane which constitutes the necessary basis for the subsequent *major* consecrations. The preliminary consecrations thus combine to form a *rite de passage*, a movement from one mode of being to another. Nevertheless, it is important to point out that even before they are performed, the aspirant is identified with a divine being: a deity, in the case of ST Vajrapāni, is invoked and thereupon believed to take possession of the neophyte who sings and dances in the manner appropriate to the deity[19]. It would be beside our purpose to discuss whether this rite (krodhāveṣa, lit. "entrance of the fierce deity") represents a genuine, as opposed to a merely simulated, state of possession, and to what extent it may – in psychological terms – be held to contribute to, or be involved with, the subsequent attainment of mystical insight[20]; what *is* significant, is the fact that the neophyte is from the very outset regarded as a being enjoying divine status.

The texts which I have consulted enumerate the minor consecrations as five, six, or seven, as shown in Fig. I. – It would be futile to embark upon a lengthy discussion of the divergencies illustrated in Fig. I. However, a few observations may nevertheless be in order. Except for one text (VA), in which Water is preceded by Flower-Garland, the initial consecration is that of *Water*, followed by *Diadem*. It seems reasonable that Fillet, which is given by ST and DVP as the fourth, but not mentioned in the other texts, is simply a specialization of the preceding Diadem. The same two texts likewise stand isolated in combining *Vajra* and *Bell* in one consecration, whereas the other texts list them as third and fourth (VA as fourth and fifth) respectively. For Vajra and Bell, CMT instead has Sword and Noose. ST then inserts the Consecration of the Vajra-Vow, (in DVP styled Own-Lord), so that the following consecration, that of the *Name*, comes as fifth in AVS, JTT, FBT, HSP, and CMT, and as sixth in VA, ST, and DVP. The final consecration would seem to be properly styled Master, as is explicity done in AVS and FBT; JTT calls it Irreversible, which according to FBT,

commenting on JTT, is just another name for the Consecration of the Master (p. 141). Permission (ST) and Buddha-Order (DVP) are certainly identical, and as is made clear by the *Yugalanaddha-prakāśa-nāma-seka-prakriyā*, (FBT p. 141), both refer to the third and last stage of the final consecration, namely that of the Master. According to FBT, this text "explains prophecy (*vyākaraṇa*), encouragement (*praśvāsa*), and permission (*anujña*) to be the Hierophant's Initation" (*ācāryābhiṣeka*).

Minor problems are posed by AVS (p. 36) which designates all six initiations as Irreversible ("because they have the nature of the six Tathāgatas"); JTT, as we have seen, uses the term only for the sixth and last; while YRM, on the other hand, stresses that the Master is *not* identical with the Irreversible[21]. At the moment I must leave these difficulties unresolved, and will proceed to discuss the *major* consecrations.

These are stated by HVT (I.1.30 and II.iii.10) to be four: that of the Master (*ācārya*), the Secret (*guhya*), the Gnosis of Wisdom (*prajñājñāna*), and the Fourth (*caturtha*). In other words, according to HVT the preliminary consecrations, regarded as a unit, represent the first of a series of four major consecrations, and if this first consecration is styled Master, it is presumably, as Snellgrove has pointed out[22], because the Master-Consecration completes the preliminary set of six. AVS (p. 36) explicitly states that the first major consecration, here called the Consecration of the Jar (*kalaśābhiṣeka*), consists of the six preliminary ones, and the following reason is given: "Because all of them include the use of a jar, they are known (collectively) as the Consecration of the Jar". The same explanation is given by FBT (p. 317).

However, both ST and DVP distinguish clearly between the preliminary consecrations and that of the Jar; thus DVP explicitly styles it "the eighth"[23]. Further, as will be seen, ST gives a different explanation of the term 'Jar', linking it with the breast of the *mudrā*[24]. For while there were only two actors in the minor consecrations, the neophyte and the preceptor, there now enters a third, the heroine, one might say, of the sacred drama, namely a young woman variously known, to quote but the most common of her titles, as *mudrā* ("Seal"), *vidyā* or *prajñā* ("Wisdom"), or simply *devī* ("Goddess")[25]. In the Consecration of the Jar (at least when this, as is the case in ST, is clearly distinguished from the preceding minor consecrations), and above all, in the Consecrations of the Secret and of the Gnosis of Wisdom, she plays a crucial role. HVT II.viii.3–5 describes her in glowing terms:

> She is neither too tall, nor too short, neither quite black nor quite white, but dark like a lotus-leaf. Her breath is sweet, and her sweat has a pleasant smell like that of musk. Her pudenda give forth a scent from moment to moment like different kinds of lotuses or like sweet aloe wood. She is calm and resolute, pleasant in speech and altogether delightful, with beauteous hair and three wrinkles in the middle of her body. By vulgar men, in fact, she would be classed as first-rate.

Name of consecration:	*Flower-Garland*	*Water*	*Diadem*	*Vajra*		*Bell*	*Name*	*Master*
Name of text:								
Vajrāvali (VA = FBT p. 140)	1	2	3	4		5	6	7
Advayavajrasamgraha (AVS p. 36)		1	2	3		4	5	6
		Irreversible (1–6)						
Jñānatilakatantra (JTT = FBT p. 140)		1	2	3		4	5	6 (= Irreversible)
FBT p. 313		1	2	3		4	5	6 (= Irreversible)
		Wisdom-Consecration (1–5)						
Hevajrasekaprakriyā (HSP p. 39–40)		1	2	3		4	5	6 a) Vajra-Vow b) Explanation c) Consolation
		Wisdom-Consecration (1–5)						
Caṇḍamahārosanatantra (CMT = p. 54)		1	2	Sword 3		Noose 4	5	
Sekoddeśaṭīkā (ST p. 32–33)		1	2	Fillet 3	Vajra-Bell 4	Vajra-Vow 5	6	Permission 7
Ḍākinīvajrapañjara (DVP = ST p. 27)		1	2	3	4	Own-Lord 5	6	Buddha-Order 7

Fig. I

ST (p. 21), on the other hand, mentions the characteristics which render a woman unfit to function as mudrā:

> She who is timid, or whose mind is confused, who . . . (?)[26], who is under the dominion of another, who is afflicted by disease or who has recently given birth, who is short-tempered, arrogant, or desirous of wealth, who delights in falsehood or strife, who has some bodily defect or who is impure[27] – in the Consecration of Wisdom these should be avoided by one's skilful preceptor, o king!

What, then, were the procedures of the rites in which the mudrā took part? On the whole, the texts are reticent. The reason is of course the esoteric character of the rites involved, which were to be performed "at night beneath a lonely tree or in a cemetery . . . or in some unfrequented spot" (HVT I.vi.6); "In a garden, in a lonely place, or in one's inner apartment" (HVT II.xi.11, cf. also I.x.3). The desire to avoid public censure may have been a reason to keep the rites secret; but the basic motive was beyond doubt the belief, so often repeated in the tantras, that if the rites were performed by those who were unqualified to do so, the results would be disastrous. In the words of HVT II.iv.71: "If he drinks strong poison, the simple man who does not understand it, falls senseless. But he who is free from delusion with his mind intent on the truth destroys it altogether". In other words, the rites imply two diametrically opposed possibilities: not only the liberation of the enlightened, but equally the bondage of the ignorant, which the rites were believed to perpetuate if practised for any other purpose than the attainment of mystic insight. Hence, "Those things by which men of evil conduct are bound, others turn into means and gain thereby release from the bonds of existence" (HVT II.ii.50)[28].

I shall postpone until the following chapter the discussion whether the rites were, as far as can be understood, intended to be performed according to their literal description. For the moment we shall simply study the ritual itself to the extent that it can be reconstructed on the basis of the texts, without entering into its various implications. As in the case of the minor consecrations, it is ST, HSP and CMT which provide the most detailed accounts. FBT will also be quoted, although it should be borne in mind that this late text consistently provides each initiation with an "interiorized" interpretation (see chap. II).

The Consecration of the Jar

> That which first of all is the touching of the glorious Wisdom on the breast, that indeed[29] is the Consecration of the Jar. (ST p. 21)
>
> In the first consecration a beautiful maiden, trembling[30], free from the flaw of confusion etc., twelve years old and in all respects perfect, should be entrusted by the disciple to his preceptor. . . . Thereupon he addresses an entreaty to his preceptor. Thereupon the preceptor, being satisfied, lets him touch, concealed from public view, the breasts of his Seal – thereby this is the Consecration of the Jar (ST p. 22)

The Consecration of the Secret[31]

From the secret comes the Consecration of the Secret – through tasting the Moon[32] and through beholding (the Lotus of the Seal). (ST p. 21) Having thereupon performed the worship of the secret, he (i.e. the preceptor) gives the Nectar of Immortality[33] to the disciple and lets him behold the Lotus of the Seal – thereby (this) is the Consecration of the Secret, through tasting the Moon and through beholding (the Lotus of the Seal). (ST p. 22)

Thereafter, in a place made secluded by means of a screen etc., the Master takes hold of the Seal who possesses the characteristics mentioned in the tantras[34], who resembles Nairātmyā[35], and on whom have been impressed the three syllables OṂ, HŪṂ, and ĀḤ on her head, heart, and throat[36] (respectively). Having recited the mantra "OṂ padma sukhadhara" ("OṂ Lotus, receptacle of bliss"), and having made the host of Buddhas situated in space enter the Vajra[37], he sprinkles her until she becomes possessed of śukra[38].

"As the Sons of Enlightenment are consecrated by the former Buddhas, (thus) are you consecrated by me with the flow of (Bodhi)citta in the Consecration of the Secret"

– with this mantra[39] the preceptor, using the middle and the fourth finger, causes the Thought-of-Enlightenment which is inside his own Vajra to drop into the mouth of the disciple who has the form of Vairocana[40]. And he, crying "Ah, bliss!" tastes the Nectar of immortality.

Having thereupon arisen, that naked woman whose form is beautiful[41] wantonly places the drops of honey[42] remaining inside her own Lotus on his lips which are in the middle of the lotus which is his face[43]. Thus is the Consecration of the Secret. (HSP p. 30)

Then there is the following Secret Consecration: The student should give clothing, etc., to his teacher and present to him a delightful woman adorned with beauty and youth . . . Then, having paid his respects to the teacher, the student should go outside and remain there, repeating the mantra: "Oṁ, O Caṇḍamahāroṣaṇa, hūṃ, phaṭ!" The teacher, moreover, should worship himself with intoxicants, meats, etc., and having satisfied Wisdom, being in her embrace, he should place the resulting white and red on a leaf, shaped into a funnel, etc. Then, having summoned the student, he should take that substance with his ring finger and thumb, and write the letters "Hūṁ, phaṭ!" on the student's tongue. Then he should have the student pronounce the words. "Ah! Pleasure!" And then the teacher should say the following "To day I cause to be produced the Buddha-knowledge, the very same means by which the past, present, and future Buddhas, Lords, obtained independent (apratiṣṭhita) Nirvāṇa. (CMT p. 55).

The *guru* unites with the *vidyā*; and ... the substance of the drop molten by the fire of great passion, falls into the "lotus" of the "Mother" and mixes with the red element of the "Mother".

The procedure of conferring the initiation is as follows: the red-and-white element of the "Father-Mother" union are taken from the "lotus" of the Mother with the thumb and ring finger[44] of the "Father-Mother" and placed on the tip of their own tongue(s). (FBT p. 319)

The Consecration of the Gnosis of Wisdom

Having been purified by all the families of the Buddhas[45] with regard to (her) limbs and head, in the Consecration of the Gnosis of Wisdom the Seal is to be given to the disciple – the Buddha, however, having been made the witness by the preceptor.

Having by means of his own Vajra-Jewel which has the nature of union of Wisdom and Means had intercourse with a beautiful maiden, twelve years of age, adorned with all ornaments and like molten gold (in hue) (so that she becomes) impassioned, having (moreover) realised the purity of the disciple, and having thrust the Vajra with its seed into the mouth (of the disciple)[46], only then is his own Seal to be given (to the disciple). (ST p. 21)

After she has been put in possession of the whole host of the five families by means of the seed syllable OṂ etc., the Seal should be given to the disciple, and the Buddha, i.e. the Vajrasattva[47], having been made the witness by the preceptor for the purpose of mutual embrace ...[48] (ST p. 22)

To the disciple who has (by now) obtained the Consecration of Wisdom and the Irreversible Consecration[49] he (i.e. the preceptor) thereupon commits the (Seal) who has the form of highest benevolence, who engenders dharma, who resembles Nairātmyā, and who has been (ritually) blessed by himself[50], reciting the mantra[51]

"Take, o take, o Great Being, this goddess who is a bestower of delight, a bestower of perfection[52], who is beautiful and charming, and having taken her, offer her worship!"

And she ...... (lacuna in Ms of about one page). When he has taken hold of her on whom have been impressed the mantras etc. mentioned above, he impassions her, causing her who has the nature of a deity to regard the joy arising from the Thought-of-Enlightenment which is inside (his Vajra). And the preceptor, having seen that he (i.e. the disciple) has reached full accomplishment, (i.e.) having seen (in him) the outward sign of a Gnosis-Being[53], (and) the disciple having manifested the delight of passion by means of the splendour of a Gnosis-Being, he (i.e. the preceptor) lets it enter the citta of the

> disciple[54]. And he (i.e. the disciple) having experienced that joy thanks to the preceptor becomes ... (lacuna) fallen from the Lotus of the Wisdom and possessed of the (proper) characteristics. Having taken with her tongue the Thought-of-Enlightenment consisting of the host of Buddhas, she arises[55].
>
> Thus is the procedure of the Consecration of the Gnosis of Wisdom. (HSP p. 30–31)

> Then he should entrust that very Wisdom to the student ... Then the teacher should whisper in his ear the division of the Four Blisses. Then the teacher should go outside. And then the Wisdom, having become naked, and squatting, should indicate her secret place with the forefinger. ... Then the candidate should concentrate that he himself has the form of Caṇḍamahāroṣaṇa; and embracing Wisdom in the form of Anger Vajrī, he should aim at the Four Blisses. When that is completed, he should present himself before his teacher, and make a circle with intoxicants, meat, etc. Thus ends the Wisdom Consecration. (CMT p. 56–57).

> The *guru* offers to the disciple that *vidyā* with whom he had entered into union at the time of the secret initiation, or a similar *vidyā* as appropriate. (FBT p. 320–21)

The reader may now ask: what about the fourth and final consecration? In fact neither HSP, CMT nor ST describe it. The reason, as will be fully discussed later on, is that this consecration is not conferred from without, but ensues of its own accord in the mind of the neophyte at the time of the third consecration. ST does not mention it at all; HSP merely states that

> Having thereupon obtained the Fourth Consecration thanks to the instruction of the preceptor, he (i.e. the disciple) once again offers a recompense to the extent of his capacity to the two Seals[56] and to the karmavajrin[57]. (p. 31)

Certain passages of HVT which previously were somewhat unclear, now fall into place, the essential structure of the rite having thus been established. Thus 1.x.5–7 clearly refer to the Consecration of the Secret. Here it is also stated that "One binds the face of the *prajñā* and likewise of the *upāya*[58], and the product of the service rendered one drops into the pupil's mouth". Likewise II.iii.13–14 must refer to the Consecration of the Secret: "The *Prajñā* of sixteen years he clasps within his arms, and from the union of the vajra and bell the Master's consecration comes about ... Then with thumb and fourth finger he drops the *bindu*[59] in the pupil's mouth". We note in passing that here the union of preceptor and Seal is assigned to the first consecration; in any case, the essential point of the Consecration of the Secret is the transfer of the Thought-of-Enlightenment of the preceptor to the neophyte. The passage just quoted then proceeds (v.16–17)

to describe the third consecration, without explicity naming it: "Then having honoured and worshipped the *Prajñā*, he should consign her to the pupil, saying: "O Great Being, take thou the Mudrā who will bring you bliss", and knowing his pupil to be worthy, free of envy and wrath, he then further commands him: "Be ye one, O Vajradhṛk!" – HVT II.iv.37–39 (not translated by Snellgrove) also refer to a rite corresponding to that of the Consecration of the Secret. Finally HVT II.xii.2–3 refer to the words spoken by the preceptor to the disciple during the second and third consecration respectively; both formulae are found in HSP, thus enabling us to see them in their proper context. Finally it may be mentioned that Chap.III of the *Prajñopāyaviniścayasiddhi*, translated by Snellgrove. refers to the various rites of consecration, but very briefly, so that no clear idea of the actual procedures can be formed[60].

Summing up, one may, following ST which is particularly clear and logical, characterize the first three major consecrations thus: in the *first*, the disciple is permitted to touch the Seal, thus experiencing the subsequent bliss by anticipation, as it were; in the *second*, this bliss is actually experienced by the preceptor, and its essence, in the form of the Thought-of-Enlightenment, transferred to the disciple, who is thereupon permitted to regard the Lotus of the Seal, i.e. the source of bliss[61]; and in the *third*, the disciple is himself united with the Seal, thus fully experiencing the bliss of union for himself – and in that very moment, as we shall see, this bliss takes the form of the *fourth* and ultimate consecration.

II. The ritual – attitudes and implications

In the face of practices which apparently contradict all previous Buddhist tradition and which are so far removed from the sense of religious propriety not only of Europeans, but equally of many if not most academically trained Indians ("The official Indian culture, formulated by Vivekananda ... by Gandhi and Radhakrishnan, keep tantrism well outside the ken of permissible interests"[62]), it is not always easy to retain a balanced view. Speaking of "the *strīpūjā*, worship of women", L. de la Vallée Poussin limited himself to hinting that "disgusting practices, both obscene and criminal, including incest, are a part of this *pūjā*"[63]. To regard tantricism as a "degeneration" of earlier Buddhism has been – and in many circles still is – extremely widespread.

Yet if the tantric rites are dismissed as mere licentiousness, it will hardly be possible to credit such rites with providing the basis for profound mystical experiences. Before passing judgement, it will therefore be well to see what justification the tantras themselves offer for their rites of consecration.

In HVT it is clearly stated that "This fourfold set of consecrations is for the purpose of perfecting living beings" (II.iii.12) – in other words, it serves the purpose of universal liberation. And as for the individual adept, the same text states that "Then taking her, one should perform the practice with the realization of one's own composure. For this practice, which is called terrifying in appear-

ance, is not taught for the sake of enjoyment" (II.ii.21–22). This is, in fact, the crucial point: the rite "is not taught for the sake of enjoyment", but for the purpose – universal in all schools of Buddhism – of attaining Buddhahood. Regarding it, as we do, from the point of view of an historian of religions, it is necessary to stress the fact that it is not viewed by its practitioners as a profane act, but as a rite steeped in sacrality. We have already noted that the minor consecrations constitute a typical *rite de passage* in which the world of flux and ignorance is left behind; let us further note that the actors in the major consecrations are regarded as divine beings – according to HSP, for instance, the Seal is assimilated to Nairātmyā, the disciple to Vairocana, and the preceptor to the Buddha. Likewise FBT (p. 319) explains that immediately before performing the Consecration of the Secret, the preceptor "with visualization of all the gods of the *maṇḍala* unites them and draws them into his own body"[64].

It therefore seems to me that Snellgrove has eloquently formulated the only possible attitude of serious scholarship when he says of the ritual of *maithuna*, of sexual union, that[65]

> If one is to judge it rightly, one must see it as part of the whole context. The realization in oneself of *samsāra* and *nirvāṇa* is the serious and avowed intention. One may regard this as no true end for the best of human endeavour and as founded on an incomplete conception of the nature of existence, but one must still in all fairness view its practices in the light of its intention, and not censure these as though they were wanton acts of foolishness.

As for the claim that the tantric movement represented a degeneration, a discussion of this question obviously falls outside the scope of the present study, but I may perhaps simply state that in this case, too, I fully share Snellgrove's conclusion that[66]

> One conceives too easily perhaps of Buddhism in terms of the abstract theories of a few famous philosophers, and so when in the tantras one is brought face to face with actual practices, the like of which had long been practised[67], one may exclaim too readily that these cannot be Buddhist. That new elements are introduced, the effect of which is far-reaching, there is no denying, but there is no essential break in the development of the doctrine. One might even claim that these new elements far from issuing in a degeneration brought about a rejuvenation, nourished in the hidden well springs of Indian religious life.

Alternatively it may be argued that the tantras are rendered respectable by their tendency to interpret the rites in a figurative sense, i.e. as referring to an inner process of realization. We shall briefly examine this point of view, which to a large extent is based on a figurative interpretation of the role of the female

partner. Of this PK III.40–41 and its commentary – if my interpretation is correct – furnishes an example:

> He who does not indulge in the union of Vajra and Lotus according to common practice[68] gains success due to mastery of *yoga*, even if he has experienced it only once. Having recognized the action of knowledge in its true nature according to its divisions[69], the yogin will again at all times recognize her (i.e. "Woman"[70]) as obscurity (prakṛti)[71]. (PK p. 29).

This passage is perhaps not necessarily to be understood as a rejection of *ritual* union, but the commentary certainly gives a wholly interiorized interpretation:

> *He*, i.e. the yogin, *who* (does not indulge etc.), *gains success due to mastery of yoga*, i.e. due to the mastery of union with the Wisdom-deity (prajñā-devatā) who is resplendent with the characteristics of the Gnosis-Seal[72], because that yogin *has experienced it once*, i.e. at the time of initiation[73] (he has experienced) due to the force of the preceptor's instruction the Gnosis of the Great Void which is technically known as ālokopalabdhi[74].
>
> By "*according*" etc. (the following is expressed): *having recognized* in the woman of flesh-and-blood (bāhyāṅganā) the division of āloka[75] etc. which is the cause of obscurity (prakṛti), and having obtained *the action of Gnosis*, i.e. the action of passion, absence-of-passion, and medium-passion (rāga-virāga-madhyarāga-vṛtti)[76], *he will again recognize*, i.e. point out, *her as obscurity* present in women of flesh-and-blood. (PK p. 34)

Although this passage is none too clear, it is at least evident that there is a rejection of the "woman of flesh-and-blood", whose substitute is an interior "Gnosis-Seal". This tendency towards interiorization seems to be found above all in the later exegetical literature; a good example is provided by Munidatta's commentary (M) to the *Caryāgīti*, which very strongly tends to emphasize the interior process, at times even exhorting the adept – as did the commentary to PK – to abandon the Seal of flesh-and-blood, e.g. M 50.2: By abandoning, o yogins, the delusion of the woman of flesh-and-blood, obtain the perfection of the Great Seal!

Yet even in this later exegetical literature the concrete, actual performance of the rite remained the ideal. Thus a work as late as the 15th century FBT, which gives a consistently interiorized interpretation of the ritual[77], nevertheless presents the opinion that Śākyamuni was himself concretely initiated in the Consecration of the Gnosis of Wisdom:

> He equipoised himself in the Space-filling *samādhi*. At that time all the Buddhas of the ten directions assembled and by the sound of snapping

> fingers aroused him from that *samādhi* . . . Thereupon he . . . proceeded to the Bodhi-tree. All the Buddhas summoned the daughter of the gods Tilottamā and revealed the method of concrete initiation (dṅos dbaṅ-du bskurba'i chul bstan) into the third, the Insight-Knowledge Initiation. (FBT p. 39)

The author admits that there is a discrepancy between the teachings of the tantras and the practice as performed in his days:

> Although it is stated in the Tantras and authoritative texts that there is an initiation based on the Action Seal[78], i.e. a concrete "wisdom"[79], this means the initiation of the "jewel-like" individual among the candidates for the high goal of the Anuttara[-tantra]. Here, the *guru* . . . unites with the *vidyā* . . . Nowadays, a person with keen faculties has Bliss produced concretely through a conviction that the *guru* and the "Knowledge Seal"[80] have united. (FBT p. 319)

As to why this initiation is no longer conferred concretely, the author of FBT gives the following explanation:

> Nowadays, we do not find such hierophants, neophytes, along with a *vidyā*, that possess the complete characteristics as have been set forth. Hence, . . . (the disciple) imagines he has been made to enter into union on account of the vividness in his mind that the body of himself and the *vidyā* is the desire-god in the sense of the "Father-Mother" union. Thereby, in one with keen faculties, bliss is produced concretely. (FBT p. 323)

This passage, reflecting, among other things, the pan-Indian theory of cosmic degeneration, clearly implies a nostalgia for the concrete consummation of the consecration, believed to have been conferred, as we have seen, on the Buddha. For the fact remains that there can be no doubt as to the actuality of the tantric rites. This is perfectly clear from the texts we have studied, and is further supported, albeit indirectly, by the historical fact that similar movements have played an important part in Indian religious history, for example the Vaishnava sahajiyā movement[81] or the "left-handed" Śākta ritual[82].

The present study is not primarily a comparative one. Yet it will be useful to examine, however briefly, some of those "hidden well-springs of Indian religious life" to which Snellgrove, quoted above, referred. Thereby it will be possible – and this I believe to be important – to see the structure and the implications of the Buddhist tantric consecrations in a wider context.

One of the most striking features of the Buddhist tantras is the role played by the female partners of gods as well as of men. The role of the Action-Seal, the physical female partner, during the various consecrations is indispensable, at

least according to certain texts: "How could the distinction between the Moments and the Joys be realized without the Action-Seal? Therefore the Action-Seal must not be vilified"[83]. This particular feature has been interpreted as an aspect of a general resurgence of the non-Aryan religious substratum, manifested in the tantric movement, Hindu as well as Buddhist, i.e. a resurgence of a religious universe in which the role of the female creative force, manifested in every woman, comes to the fore[84]. With all possible reservations for the Buddhist tantras, where the active part is always played by the male element ("Means", "Compassion", etc.) and the female element is represented as passive ("Wisdom", "Void", etc.), this nevertheless seems to provide a plausible explanation of the emergence of erotic symbolism – and practices! – in Buddhism.

The other major "well-spring" with which we are concerned is to be found in the Upanishads, for here we discover, at an early stage in Indian religious life, that identification of the sexual act and of ritual which is so typical of the tantras. Thus the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-up.* expresses the sexual act in terms of ritual; i.e. the sexual act is sanctified by being homologized with a ritual:

> La femme, en verité, est Agni. Son giron est le combustible, les poils la fumée, la vulve la flamme, ce qu'on y introduit les charbons, la jouissance les étincelles. Dans ce feu-là les dieux offrent le sperme; de cette offrande nait l'homme (VI.2.13)[85].

Or the sexual act may be regarded as a liturgical chant:

> Il l'appelle, c'est le *hiṅkāra*; il lui fait sa proposition, c'est le *prastāva*; il s'étend avec la femme, c'est l'*udgītha*; il s'étend sur la femme, c'est le *pralihāra*; il arrive au terme, c'est le *nidhana*. Ceci est le (*sāman*) *Vāmadevya* réalisé dans le coit.
>
> Celui qui connait ainsi que le *Vāmadevya* se réalise dans le coït, celui-à s'accouple, il se reproduit de coït en coït, il va jusqu'au terme de sa vie ... Il ne faut se refuser à aucune; telle est l'application pratique. (*Chāndogya-up* II. 5. 13.1–2)[86]

Conversely, we find that as early as in the Brāhmaṇas, the ritual itself was explained in sexual terms:

> Si, dans le cours d'une récitation, le prêtre sèpare les deux premiers quarts du. vers, et rapproche étroitement les deux autres, c'est que la femme écarte les cuisses et que l'homme les serre dans l'accouplement; le prêtre représente ainsi l'accouplement, afin que le sacrifice donne une postèrité nombreuse. La rècitation à voix basse par le hotar est une émission de semence; l'adhvaryu, quand le hotar lui adresse l'appel sacramentel, se met à quatre pattes et détourne le visage; c'est que les quadrupèdes se tournent le dos pour émettre la semence.[87].

This passage is of great interest, for it provides an early precedent for the use of sexual terms to describe a ritual which in fact did not involve overtly sexual actions. As we have seen, this is precisely what happened with the tantric ritual: the erotic descriptions of it were interpreted in terms of images expressing an interiorized ritual – the tantras prolonging in this respect, too, i.e. in the development of "interiorization of ritual", an Upanishadic tradition[88].

Dealing with the tantras, it is, in fact, difficult to say where a ritual, whether external or interior, is described in sexual terms, and where a sexual act is expressed in ritual terms. The problem has been well expressed by Tucci[89]:

> ... the cosmology, mythology and soteriology of India are dominated by the presence of sex. The processes of speculative thought are directed towards the erection of finespun philosophical and mystical structures which transform the erotic and sexual element into a symbol of the stages of the divine epiphany or into an object of meditation, sublimating and purifying it to such an extent that it is not always easy to separate the two interpretations and distinguish the real from the allegorical sense ... Tantric thought ... is subjected to the same process of sublimation and "transference" – not always with complete success.

The texts are in fact steeped in that systematic ambiguity of erotic terminology which perhaps no-one has stressed more clearly than Eliade[90]:

> Tantric texts are often composed in an "intentional language (*sandhyābhāsā*), a secret, dark, ambiguous language in which a state of consciousness is expressed by an erotic term and the vocabulary of mythology or cosmology is charged with Hathayogic or sexual meanings ... The semantic polyvalence of words finally substitute ambiguity for the usual system of reference in every ordinary language ...; through language itself ... the yogin must enter the plane on which semen can be transformed into thought, and vice versa.

The ambiguity which Eliade has so well described follows, as far as the Buddhist tantras are concerned, from the ambiguity of all phenomena, an idea which derives, ultimately, from the Madhyamika doctrine of the two planes of truth or of being – the relative (*saṃvṛti-satya*) and the absolute (*paramārtha-satya*)[91]. Thus the bodhicitta, the Thought-of-Enlightenment, may be regarded from the point of view of either mode of being: as relative it is the physical seed, "white as white jasmine", as Absolute it is "essentially blissful" (HVT II.iv.30). In either case it is the same Thought-of-Enlightenment: "The Lord has the form of *śukra*" (HVT I.viii.50); "I am the Master with the thirty-two marks, the Lord with the eighty characteristics[92] ... and my name is *śukra*" (HVT II.ii.41).

The importance of this dual, at once concrete and spiritual, nature of the Thought-of-Enlightenment cannot be too strongly stressed. It is only in the light

of this concept that the initiations studied in the previous chapter can be understood as truly religious acts, profoundly affecting their participants. This we must keep in mind in particular when dealing with the Consecration of the Secret. In this connection, it should be pointed out – apparently noone has previously done so – that this consecration implies, as far as the preceptor is concerned, an *emission* of the Thought-of-Enlightenment; how could it otherwise be transferred to the pupil? Thus the statement that "all Vajrayāna texts seem to insist on seminal retention as a *sine qua non*" (A. Bharati)[93], is only true if it is understood to apply to the *third* consecration (admittedly the most important one); but this distinction has so far, to the best of my knowledge, not been made. Thus there is no need, as does Bharati[94], to resort to forced interpretations in connection with passages like the following (PVS III.20–21):

> The most blessed Master, having thereupon entered into union with the Seal, and having thereafter caused the Thought-of-Enlightenment to enter the Lotus-Casket, the dwelling of the Buddhas, . . . thereupon consecrates the neophyte, who is (now) united with the Seal.

These lines refer to the second and the third consecration in due succession. – Now, there must be a reason for this emission, and this reason is, I believe, suggested in the passage from FBT quoted above (p. 319): the union of the Thought-of-Enlightenment (seed, white, male, etc.) with the female fluid (blood, red, female, etc.)[95] points to that union of Wisdom and Means, manifested in the form of man and woman, which the neophyte will experience for himself in the subsequent consecration, thus restoring the unity and fullness of the Buddha-nature. Even if the entire sequence of consecrations is envisaged as taking place inside the neophyte, the function of the imagery remains the same as that of the external rite.

III. The relation of the "Moments", "Joys", and "Seals" to the ritual

We have seen that the progress of the neophyte towards complete spiritual realization is made possible by a series of consecrations which at the same time indicates the various stages of this progress. However, the same process of spiritual maturation is conceived of as a series of four "Joys" (ānanda) taking place at the appropriate "Moments" (kṣaṇa). Further, the female partner, indispensable in one form or another throughout the ritual of the major consecrations, is likewise conceived of as fourfold. It is therefore important to establish, as far as possible, the relationship between these various concepts.

Basing ourselves, first of all, on HVT, we discover the following correspondences[96] (Fig. II).

As Fig. II shows, each Joy, experienced at a particular Moment, is connected with one of the four Consecrations[97]. How, then, are the four Joys described in

Name of Joy (I.i.28; x.13; II.iii.9)	*Corresponding Moment* (I.i.24; II.iii.6)	*Consecration* (II.iii.10)
Joy (ānanda)	Variety (vicitra)	Master
Perfect Joy (paramānanda)	Development (vipāka)	Secret
Joy of Cessation (viramānanda)	Consummation (vimarda)	Wisdom
Simultaneously-arisen Joy (sahajānanda)	Blank (vilakṣaṇa)	Fourth

Fig. II

HVT? A number of relevant passages of HVT may be rendered schematically as follows (Fig. III).

Two questions arise from the material presented in Figs. II and III – firstly, what is the significance of the succession of the various Joys, and secondly, what is the relationship between the Joys and the four Consecrations? We shall examine these questions in detail.

What emerges with great clarity from Fig. III is the transcendency, the radical "otherness", of the Fourth Joy in relation to the other three. They are "of this world", but the Simultaneously-arisen Joy "exists not in these three" (I.x.15); in it there is found "neither passion nor absence of passion, nor yet a middle state" (I.viii.35;x.17), therein is "neither Wisdom nor Means" (I.viii.35 – Wisdom and Means correspond to nirvāṇa and saṃsāra respectively, cf. I.viii. 34); it is "other than these three and knows neither passion nor the absence of passion" (II.vi.8). Consequently, it is ineffable: "By no other may it be told, and from no one may it be received" (I.viii.36), "It is known intuitively" (ātmanā jñāyate) (ibid.) and can only be directly experienced by oneself (svasaṃvedya)[98]. Thus the Moment at which it takes place is said to be Blank (vilakṣaṇa, lit. "void of characteristics") or "free of diversity" (II.iii. 22)[99].

It would therefore appear to be quite natural that the Simultaneously-arisen Joy should come last – for what could there be beyond this? Nevertheless two texts in AVS – the *Sekanirṇaya* (SN) (p. 28 l. 3–4) and the *Caturmudrāniścaya*

	is caused by:	*results in:*	*characterized as:*	
Joy	desire for contact	some bliss	a middle state	of this world
Perfect Joy	desire for bliss	yet more	saṃsāra	,,
Joy of Cessation	the passing of passion	a passionless state	nirvāṇa	,,
Simultaneously-arisen Joy	thereby the fourth is realized	the Sim.-arisen Joy	exists not in these three	
	(HVT I.viii.33)	(I.viii.32)	(I.viii.34)	(I.x.15)

Fig. III

(CMN)[100] (p. 32 l. 11) – list this Joy as *third*. So, in fact, does HVT in three passages where the Simultaneously-arisen Joy is stated to come "at the end of the Joy that is Perfect and at the beginning of the Joy of Cessation" (II.ii.40; v.66, 70). This order is apparently contradicted not only by the passages quoted in Figs. II and III (and by the very name "the Fourth"), but by the term *viramānta* (HVT I.viii.24) which is used to describe the Simultaneously-arisen Joy and which is translated by Snellgrove as "the End of Cessation"[101]. However, this term might just as well be translated "having Cessation at its end", in other words, "followed by the Joy of Cessation".

The crucial point is the Joy of Cessation. If it is regarded as the third Joy, one would, as suggested by Fig. II, a priori suspect that it may be correlated with the third Consecration, i.e. the Consecration of the Gnosis of Wisdom. We thus arrive at the second question, viz. the relationship of the Joys and the four Consecrations. We have seen (Chap. I) that the third Consecration involves the ritual union of the disciple and the Seal. In other words, the Joy of Cessation would appear to be connected with sexual union. This is further brought out by the term designating the corresponding Moment, vimarda, which literally means "rubbing". Thus HVT I.viii.31, where the third Joy is called "the Joy of coition" (suratānanda) – the preceding two Joys having been characterized as yogin and yoginī respectively – becomes intelligible[102].

However, in the act of sexual union *all four* Joys are experienced; this is clearly stated by CMT (pp. 56–57), speaking of the Consecration of Wisdom:

> Then the teacher should whisper in his ear the division of the Four Blisses . . . and embracing Wisdom . . . he (i.e. the disciple) should aim at the Four Blisses. When that is completed, he should present himself before his teacher . . .

The following passage from ST (pp. 54–55) likewise serves to show that the four Joys follow each other in one continuous process. In this passage the succession of the various Joys is seen as a result of the downward movement of the Thought-of-Enlightenment from its reservoir in the brain[103], through the seven cakras or "lotuses" of the body[104], to the tip of the Vajra (the "Vajra-Jewel"):

> The coming of the śukra, consisting of the five lunar digits called Nandā. Bhadrā, Jayā, Riktā and Pūrṇā,[105] from the lotus with four petals of the uṣṇīṣa[106] to the lotus with sixteen petals of the forehead, (and its) permeation (vyāpti) of both, is the *First Joy*.
>
> Thereafter (follows) the Perfect Joy, in the throat and in the heart: (the coming of the śukra) from the lotus with thirty-two petals of the throat to the lotus with eight petals of the heart (and their) complete permeation is *Perfect Joy*.
>
> Thereupon follows the Joy of Cessation: (the coming of śukra) from the lotus with sixty-four petals of the navel to the lotus with thirty-two

petals of the sexual organ (guhya) (and their) permeation is the *Joy of Cessation*. And (while the śukra is) in the navel it (i.e. the Joy of Cessation) is characterised by various delights such as close embraces, the sudden drawing-in of breath and deep moanings (due to thrills of pleasure), etc. However, as (the bliss arising when the śukra is) in the sexual organ eludes concrete description, the Joy of Cessation, arising at the end (of sexual union), is the mere perception of bliss, being characterised by the thought "I am experiencing bliss".

But a delight which is gone is not bliss; therefore, the coming of the drop which has the sixteen lunar digits from the lotus of the sexual organ to the lotus with eight petals of the Vajra-Jewel which is hidden therein (i.e. in the sexual organ) is the *Simultaneously-arisen Joy*. It is permanent due to the absence of emission (of śukra) through the force of retention.[107]

This extremely instructive passage, which, on the strength of the passage from CMT just quoted, we may take to refer to the *third* Consecration, has certain important implications. Firstly it distinguishes between actual bliss of orgasm and the perception or reflection that such bliss has been experienced. It is this perception, "coming at the end" (paryantaja), which properly speaking is the Joy of Cessation. "Consummation (vimarda) is defined as the reflection (ālocana) that bliss has been experienced by oneself" (HVT II.iii.8). Thus the Simultaneously-arisen Joy arises simultaneously – *and hence its name* – with the orgasm, i.e. at the Moment of Consummation, but its nature is *transcendent*, for that which enters the final cakra, that of the Vajra-Jewel, is the sixteenth digit of the Moon[108], in other words the Thought-of-Enlightenment in its absolute mode of being. From the point of view of profane time this ultimate Joy is also *transient*, for while "arising simultaneously" with orgasm, it is almost immediately replaced by the Joy of Cessation when grasped by the consciousness ("I have enjoyed bliss"), thus replacing unity with duality.

Secondly the final line of this passage from ST shows that the transcendent nature of the experience when the Thought-of-Enlightenment enters the Vajra-Jewel depends on its *non-emission*. Bodhicittaṃ notsṛjet – "the Thought-of-Enlightenment must not be emitted", on this the texts insist[109]. We need not doubt that this is to be taken in a literal sense. Techniques for retention or re-absorbtion of the semen are well-known in Haṭha-yoga and are still practised by certain Indian yogins, thus prolonging beliefs and practices attested as early as the Upanishads[110].

Thus sexual union, if performed ignorantly and with profane intentions, will not entail the experiencing of ultimate bliss; for the ultimate Joy, while 'arising simultaneously' with orgasm, will not arise at all unless the neophyte has been properly prepared, both yogically and sacramentally. It would be a fatal mistake to confuse the essentially profane experience of orgasm with the Simultaneously-arisen Joy. Hence CMN (p. 33), to which we shall return, warns us that:

> Masters who teach evil doctrines, having performed the (Consecration of the) Gnosis of Wisdom and having stated that "The Simultaneously-arisen (joy) has (now) been experienced!" cause (the neophyte) to feel (false) satisfaction.

The confusion into which such masters lead their neophytes is compared, as we shall see, with the erroneous belief that the reflection of a face in a mirror is the face itself[111]. In other words, a profane orgasm, however blissful, is not identical with the ultimate state of spiritual transcendence; yet the similarity – whether deceptive or real – is so close that CMN (p. 33) calls the bliss of sexual union "the inferior Simultaneously-arisen (Joy)", adding, however, that this "is not the immobility of the (transcendent) Simultaneously-arisen (Joy)"[112].

In the context of the Consecrations, then, the ultimate Joy is experienced during the third Consecration, i.e. it arises simultaneously with it. This is stated clearly in passages of which the following (M1,2) is typical:

> Having obtained the Consecration of the Gnosis of Wisdom, ... measure the Fourth Joy! ... In the Joy of Cessation, know the Simultaneously-arisen Joy!

Thus from point of view of consecration, it is necessary that the Joy of Cessation should be fourth[113]. "If Consummation is the reflection (viz. "I have enjoyed bliss"), how can it be thought to come as third?" (AVS p.28)[114]. Snellgrove, who quotes this passage from AVS, has already suggested this[115]:

"One suspects that the placing of the Joy Innate as third is, however, in direct analogy with the ritualistic embrace and actual experience. As third, it is followed by the Joy called Cessation, which is a return to normal experience".

This conclusion receives final confirmation from CMS (AVS p. 32) where we find the following significant passage:

> When one places Blank in the middle (i.e. between Development and Consummation), this is to be understood in (the context of) Consecration. In Haṭhayoga, however, the position of Simultaneously arisen (Joy) and of (the corresponding) Blank must be understood to be at the end. But this has been taught by the Lord both in the context of Consecration and of Hathayoga.

Placing the Joy of Cessation last reflects accuracy of observation both in the context of the ritual, and in psychological terms. While it is not quite clear what is meant by "Haṭhāyoga" in the passage quoted from CMN, I nevertheless suspect that it indicates an *interiorized* experiencing of the Four Joys, connected with the *upward* march of the Thought-of-Enlightenment through the cakras of the navel, heart, throat, and head, the latter being frequently referred to, for example in M, as the "cakra of Great Bliss" (2.4, 8.2, 16.5, 21.4, 47.2), equated

with the "Fourth Bliss" (16.2)[116]. The tendency to list the Joys in this particular succession (as in HVT I.i.28; x.13, etc.) would also be strengthened by the universal Indian fondness for contrasting three stages comprising various aspects of profane, mundane existence, with a fourth, indicating transcendency, sacrality, etc., typified in the well-known list of the states of consciousness (waking state, dream, dreamless sleep; "the fourth")[117].

We now turn to the fourfold set of Seals. They are enumerated as follows (Fig. IV) in our texts.

Fig. IV shows that there is considerable disagreement between the various texts as to the order of the Seals. For instance, while the Great Seal (mahāmudrā) is placed last in the majority of the texts, its position as third in AVS corresponds to the position in that text of the Simultaneously-arisen Joy. We may further note that PK identifies the Gnosis-Seal (jñānamudrā) with the Dharma-Seal; in TDK, however, it takes the place of the Convention-Seal (samayamudrā). Finally, YRM places the Convention-Seal second, which is in conflict with the other texts. Further discussion of the problems posed by these discrepancies will not be undertaken here; at the present stage, it will be of greater importance to attempt to define the nature of each Seal, and with this end in view, I shall now proceed to translate a number of relevant passages, beginning with three passages from ST:

> The Action-Seal bestows fleeting bliss (ksarasukha), the Gnosis-Seal bestows quivering bliss (spandasukha), the Great Seal bestows motionless bliss (niṣpandasukha). (ST p. 36).
>
> The Action-Seal has breasts and hair; she is the cause of bliss in the Realm of Desire (kādhātu). "Action" consists in kissing, embracing, touching the sexual organ, rubbing the Vajra, etc.; the Seal who is characterised thereby gives proof of herself (pratyayakāriṇī), and the proof in this case has the characteristic of fleeting bliss. "She gives happiness (*mud* -am), i.e. a high degree of bliss, or delight (*ra*-tim) – hence, she is called "Seal" (*mud-rā*).
>
> The Gnosis-Seal is imagined by one's mind (syacitta-parikalpitā) . . . It is knowledge, the cause of bliss in the Realm of Form (rūpadhātu), characterised by the imagining of previous smiles, states of enjoyment, etc.[118]. Here the proof has the characteristic of quivering bliss[119].

PK(p.34 1.54)	YRM(p.108)	TDK(p.70)	ST(p.36,56,62)	CMN = AVS(p.30,32)
karmamudrā	karma°	karma°	karma°	karma°
dharma°(= jñāna°)	samaya°	dharma°		dharma°
			jñāna°	
samaya°	dharma°	jñāna°		mahā°
mahā°	mahā°	mahā°	mahā°	samaya°

Fig. IV

"It is great and it is a Seal hence it is called the Great Seal. Further, its greatness consists in its being endowed with all excellent forms[120], not its restrictedness (?)[121] ... Here the proof is void of elements which can be imagined by one's own mind[122], being (nothing but) the appearance of one's mind[123], (svacittapratibhāsa) preceded by signs such as smoke etc.[124]; (yet) it is accessible to yogins 'like an opposing army'[125].

But the Fruit-Seal is the pleasure of the Great Seal, characterised by the knowledge of supreme imperishable bliss. (ST p.56).

When the Thought-of-Enlightenment, embraced by its own Wisdom, i.e. the Action-Seal etc., has reached the lotus of the Vajra-Jewel, (there ensues) by means of the Action-Seal, the state of fleeting bliss in which the Moon has entered the Vajra-Jewel.

By means of the Gnosis-Seal the state of quivering bliss (is brought about). "Quivering" – (by this is understood) a retention of that which is fleeting, being like a flow. When these two states of bliss are manifested, they produce perfection in this world, characterised by mastery in the Realms of Desire and of Form.

By means of the Great Seal, however, which is an imperishable mental state (niṣpandākṣarabhāvanā), perfection transcending this world, characterised by knowledge, is brought about. (ST p.62).

The most complete description of the four Seals is found in CMN (AVS p.31–32), of which the greater part will now be translated:

The nature of the Action-Seal will now be described: the Seal who consists of 'action', i.e. of body, speech and mind, and whose nature is mental-construction (kalpanā) – in that Action-Seal "The (four) Joys arise distinguished by the Moments. And from knowledge of these Moments the knowledge of Bliss is consummated in that sound EVAM"[126] (HVT II.iii.5) ...

"All that exists is simultaneously-arisen"[127]: it is said to be 'simultaneously-arisen' because it may be compared to a reflection which arises simultaneously (sahajacchāyānukāritvāt). The reflection which arises simultaneously produces a Gnosis which is similar to the Simultaneously-arisen (Joy). (Therefore) the (Consecration of) Gnosis of Wisdom is 'simultaneously-arisen'. But for that very reason, too, the origin of the Simultaneously-arisen (Joy) is not to be found in the Gnosis of Wisdom, (that origin) "whose nature, known as Simultaneously-arisen, has the uncontrived characteristic of all dharmas". Therefore, having obtained an Action-Seal, the corresponding fruit (niṣyanda-phalam) is obtained[128]. Outcome (niṣyanda) is similar activity. 'Similarity' (may be illustrated as follows): just as the reflection of a face found in a mirror is not the face (itself), but merely produces a likeness thereof as it (i.e. the face) was not actually present (in the

> mirror) before (the image appeared), nor now (that the image is there) – yet people, believing that they have seen their actual face, are satisfied due to an illusion –, thus in the same way masters who teach evil doctrines perform the (Consecration of the) Gnosis of Wisdom, and stating that the Simultaneously-arisen (Joy) has now been experienced, they cause (the neophyte) to feel (false) satisfaction. And being satisfied, they have no idea of the Dharma-Seal. But as they do not know the Dharma-Seal, how can that which is spontaneously-produced (akṛtrima) and which is called Simultaneously-arisen be obtained by means of the Action-Seal alone, who is not spontaneously-produced? For the appearance of a result depends on its cause being of the same nature, and not of a different nature; thus from a śālī-seed appears a śālī-sprout, and not that of a kodravya. Thus from proximity to the spontaneously-produced Dharma-Seal arises the spontaneously-produced Simultaneously-arisen (Joy). Therefore the Dharma-Seal is said to be the cause of the Great Seal, difference in that which is no difference being postulated by means of a figurative expression.

Why is this? Here the Lord has said:

> "The sacred syllable E, adorned at its centre by the syllable V A M, is the abode of all delights, the casket of Buddha-gems" (HVT II.iii.4).
>
> As it may be compared to a reflection of the Buddhas (buddhacchāyānukāritvāt), the 'casket' is the basis, i.e. the support; hence the Lotus of the Action Woman is a heap of 'gems', i.e. an abundance of Joy. When the jewel of the relative Thought-of-Enlightenment, by way of the central psychic-channel (avadhūtī), has entered that pure place during the pleasurable union of the male and female sexual organs, at that moment arises the knowledge, called "momentary" (kṣaṇika), which is known as the inferior simultaneously-arisen (joy) (aparasahajākhyam). (But) that is not the immobility of the (transcendent) Simultaneously-arisen (Joy) (sahajanispandaḥ)[129]. In accordance with its nature it is called, both in Consecration and in Haṭha-yoga, the corresponding fruit accompanied by the four Moments of the Action-Seal, i.e. the three joys of (the Consecration of) the Gnosis of Wisdom. The setting-forth of the corresponding fruit of the Action Seal is the first.
>
> The Dharma-Seal has the Realm of Dharma as its nature, is not manifested in dispersion (nisprapañca), is free from discursive-thought, non-contrived, non-produced, has Compassion as its nature, is the one agreeable means of Perfect Joy. That which by the perpetuity of its continuity has the nature of the Simultaneously-arisen (Joy) i.e. that which is inseparable from (the Consecration of) Wisdom through (the latter's) simultaneous emergence (therewith), that is called 'Dharma-Seal'[130] . . .

And thus it has been said by the Lord:

"*Lalanā* has the nature of Wisdom and *Rasanā* consists in the Means, and *Avadhūtī* is in the middle, free from the notions of subject and object" (HVT I.i.14).

The *avadhūtī* which is found in the middle between the *lalanā* and the *rasanā* is no other than the Dharma-Seal, the sole movement of mind in which all things are comprehended and which has the nature of the Simultaneously-arisen; (and it is) the cause of the Great Seal due to its non-difference (therefrom).

The setting-forth of the Dharma-Seal, the fruit of maturation (vipākaphala)[131], is the second.

"It is great and it is a Seal" – hence it is called the Great Seal. The Great Seal is without own-nature, is free from the hindrance of objects of knowledge etc., is similar to the clear mid-day sky of autumn, is the basis of all blessings, combining in one nature saṃsāra and nirvāṇa, its body is Compassion without support, its one form is Great Bliss. And thus (it is said):

"Elements-of-existence not produced by intellection are wholesome, those produced by intellection are unwholesome".

And in the *Pravacana* (it is said):

"Who has not a single mental image formed by discursive thought, whose intellect is not founded (on any idea), without recollection, without anything formed in the mind, without support – obeisance to thee!"

That of which this is said, is called the Great Seal. By means of that Great Seal, whose form cannot be conceived, the fruit which is called Convention-Seal is born. The setting-forth of the Great Seal, (the fruit of) purity[132]. That is said to be the Convention-Seal which is a flashing-forth (visphuraṇam) for the good of living beings of Vajradhara in the form of Heruka, an immaculate form which has the nature of the Body of Enjoyment as well as of Illusion ......

The setting-forth of the Convention-Seal, the result of heroic deed (puruṣakāra)[133], is the fourth.

Finally, I quote a passage from FBT (p. 321):

"In explanation of the "Action Seal" and the "Knowledge Seal" with which one enters union – by reason of acts (karma) of former lives, one flings himself on the body of a woman, and there realizes, hence "the Action Seal"; and such actions as the mutual embrace with limbs do not require any contemplation by oneself – only the seal itself (*or* herself) is necessary, hence "the Action Seal". Nowadays, the general explanation of the expression 'renowned Knowledge Seal' is as follows: one

> does not realize in a concrete place, i.e. the woman. However, Knowledge is one's own *samādhi*. Being the seal which expands and generates that, it is called "Knowledge Seal".

Summing up, we may conclude that the Action-Seal is a woman of flesh and blood; she is the "External Seal" (bāhyamudrā). She is also known as the "Action-Woman" (karmāṅganā). She is the human partner of the adept during the rites. Seen in isolation, her role is provisional; the bliss she gives is "fleeting" (kṣara), and the knowledge which results from the union with her is "momentary" (kṣaṇika). CMN admits that this bliss is "simultaneously-arisen" – in the sense, perhaps, of "spontaneous" – but as such it is "inferior" (apara). Nevertheless, as far as the four Joys are concerned, the role of the Action Seal becomes crucial – for the neophyte – during the third Consecration, i.e. the Consecration during which he is united with her in her aspect of Wisdom. CMT states that all four Joys are experienced by the neophyte during this Consecration; CMN does not say so explicitly, but nevertheless envisages the succession of the four Seals as a continuous process, beginning with the Action-Seal.

The following Seal is the Dharma-Seal (PK, TDK, CMN) or the Convention-Seal (YRM). CMN discusses the Dharma-Seal at length, stressing its "non-difference" from the final attainment, the Great Seal. As the effect must be similar to the cause, the Dharma-Seal is the cause (kāraṇa) of the Great Seal, both being – in contrast to the Action Seal – "spontaneously-produced" (akṛtrima). The Dharma-Seal is, in fact, the avadhūtī, the central "psychic-nerve" (nāḍī) which, located in the spine, pierces the various "psychic-centres" (cakras) on its way to the "Lotus of Great Bliss" situated in the head. PK, as we have seen, identifies the Dharma-Seal with the Gnosis-Seal; and this is supported by M where the avadhūtī is frequently styled "the Gnosis-Seal"[134]. The importance of the avadhūtī can hardly be overrated; M, for instance, is nothing but a sustained paean of the divine yoginī in the yogin's own body – for the Gnosis-Seal is frequently pictured in the songs of CG as a woman, dissolute or socially despised, a ḍombī, a caṇḍālī, a dancing-girl, a harlot, etc. In M the Gnosis-Seal is characterised as "non-self" (nairātmā), i.e. the Void, and as "free of all opacity", i.e. the defilements of unredeemed matter[135].

ST, as we have seen, places the Gnosis-Seal second. This, however, does not warrant an identification with the Dharma-Seal of CMN, for while the latter is connected with the Realm of Dharma (dharmadhātu), is free from discursive-thought (nirvikalpā), and is non-produced (utpādarahitā), the former is connected with the Realm of Form, and is imagined by one's mind (svacittaparikalpitā).

The Convention-Seal, which CMN places last, is stated to be the form of the fierce deity arising from within the adept as a result of his sādhana; perhaps the "Fruition-Seal" (phalamudrā) described by ST (p. 56) as the imperishable bliss resulting from the attainment of the Great Seal is identical with the Convention-Seal.

The texts studied here seem to suggest that the Gnosis-Seal does not originally belong to the fourfold set, but rather to a – perhaps earlier – threefold set, as found above all in ST (see Fig.IV), but also, it might be added, in M. ST (p. 62) – contrasting in this to some extent with M – is careful to distinguish the Gnosis-Seal, which is characterised as "mundane" (laukika), from the Great Seal, which is "transcendent" (lokottara). In FBT, as we have seen in Chap.II, the Gnosis-Seal replaces the Action-Seal, but is nevertheless mentally personified as a woman; this is also indicated by ST (p. 56) where the Gnosis-Seal is characterised by the remembrance of "former smiles, states of enjoyment, etc." Thus the Gnosis-Seal effectively retains the erotic nature of the Action-Seal.

The Great Seal is identical with Simultaneously-arisen Joy (HVT II.iv.45), Great Bliss (HVT II.ii.31), etc. It cannot be ascertained by means of mental concepts (ST p. 56), and is characterised by omniscience (ST p. 62), etc. It is nothing but "an appearance of one's own mind" (svacittapratibhāsa), and for that very reason cannot be grasped by the mind[136]. This final state will be further discussed in the following chapter.

The fourfold set of Seals bears, in my opinion, the marks of secondary speculation, based on the doubtlessly older notions of the four Consecrations and four Joys[137]. An indication of this is the fact that the texts show considerable disagreement as to the order of the Seals, and the fourfold set is in any case unknown in an early and basic tantra like the HVT; here only Seal and Great Seal are referred to, the former being the physical woman, the latter the transcendent state aspired to[138]. The fact that the physical woman, too, may be referred to as Great Seal "in relative form" (HVT II.viii.1) simply shows that the terminology had not yet – at the stage of HVT – become finally fixed. It would therefore appear – although this can only be verified by further research – that the formulation of the doctrine of the fourfold set of Seals was accompanied by a tendency to de-emphasize the role played by the physical partner of the adept, and replace her – without, however, wholly eliminating her, which could not be done without unbalancing the entire scheme – by the Gnosis-Seal.

Our study has now come to the point where it is possible to attempt the translation of a rather difficult passage of YRM (p. 107–9) which has previously been translated by Snellgrove. However, as my interpretation of the entire passage differs from his, both as to its fundamental structure and on many points of detail, I shall proceed to give my own translation. For the text and for comparison with Snellgrove's translation, the reader is referred to his study of HVT[139].

> He progresses (*car*-ati) far from evil elements-of-existence" – hence he is called "Master" (ā-*cār*-ya). That, indeed, is his practice (saṃvara), having the nature of the Consecration of the Master, which with the help of the Action-Seal is a proceeding characterised by the Four Moments and the Four Joys[140] . . . .
>
> Firstly, then, one is consecrated by means of the Consecration of the Master in Hevajra etc., in order that one may become worthy of listen-

ing to, reflecting, and meditating on the yoginitantras. So according to one's understanding the (Consecrations of the) Master, the Secret, the Wisdom, and the Fourth – characterised by the Four Moments – are experienced. When the zealous application of those who have received the Consecration of the Master and whose sense-faculties are weak has been established, instruction in meditation (bhāvanā) is given by means of the Action-Seal.

Thus – even in the Process of Realization[141] – the perception, in accordance with the instruction of the preceptor, of the Four Joys corresponding to the Four Moments by means of the Jewel (of the Vajra) which is placed in the Secret, is called the Consecration of the Secret – because it cannot be explained to yogins in terms of diffuse mental concepts[142]. In this consecration, instruction in meditation on the Convention-Seal is communicated to those of medium sense-faculties.

Likewise (the Consecration of the Gnosis of) Wisdom: "Wisdom" is the highest Gnosis; "Gnosis" is the quality of all elements-of-existence of being nothing but one's own mind[143]. The consecration which has the purpose of bringing this (Gnosis) about, is the Consecration of the Gnosis of Wisdom. So the marking – with the help of the External Seal and in accordance with the instruction of one's preceptor – of the (Four) Moments, (a marking, that is,) which has the form of the unity of the three psychicveins corresponding to the three kinds of consciousness: imaginary, contingent, and absolute, by means of one's (Vajra-) Jewel (placed in the Lotus) – that is to be known as the Gnosis of Wisdom. Being consecrated with that consecration, instruction in the Dharma-Seal, i.e. the "illusion-like samādhi", is to be communicated to those of strong sense-faculties.

Likewise "Then the Four thus" (HVT II.iii. 10): the consecration by which one sees or realizes that which has the nature of Thusness, Climax-of-being, Realm-of-Elements, etc. without any difference of meaning, (that is the Fourth Consecration). Thusness is expressed by the word "thus"; "then" means that one gives it at the same time as the (Consecration of the) Gnosis of Wisdom.

So that which, possessing the characteristic of absence of discrimination as to definite place of origin, is made – in accordance with the instruction of one's preceptor and with the help of an External Seal – the object of perception by means of a process (yoga) which is not the object of perception, that is called the Fourth. . .

Therefore, precisely at this time of the Fourth Consecration, there is the attainment of the Great Seal for those beings who are fully perfected. (YRM p. 107–09).

Beyond doubt this passage raises as many questions as it answers. Granted that YRM represents a later stage in the development of Buddhist tantricism

than HVT which it explains, it nevertheless enables us to complete and clarify our study of the tantric consecration in certain important respects.

In the first place, it correlates the Four Seals and the Four Consecrations, as follows:

Action-Seal	Master
Convention-S°	Secret
Dharma-S°	Wisdom
Great S°	Fourth

Fig. V

We also note that the union of the neophyte with the Wisdom is here stated to take place during the Consecration of the Secret, and that nothing is said of a transference of the Thought-of-Enlightenment from the preceptor to the disciple during this consecration, on which other texts, as we have seen, insist. The essential point, however, is this: during the *first* consecration, the preceptor ("master") unites with the Action-Seal, and experiences, in due succession, the various Joys; in the *second*, the neophyte enters the same union, and experiences the same succession of Joys – i.e., strictly speaking, during the second consecration he experiences only the second (or perhaps the first and second) Joy, but the important point is that the *third* and *fourth* consecrations follow – provided he has the required spiritual keenness – *while the disciple remains in union with his Wisdom*. Thus in the second consecration, he is united with the Action-Seal (the "Jewel" being placed in the "Secret"); but at the same time he is initiated into the Convention-Seal, which is a "meditation", literally a "thought-construction" (bhāvanā)[144]. Thereupon – if he has the ability – he enters a state of samādhi, i.e. "enstasis", in which there is no "thought-construction", only "Gnosis" (jñāna) in which all elements-of-existence reveal themselves as being nothing but one's own mind (in its pure, non-discursive state) – this is the Dharma-Seal; and at that very instant he may experience that transcendent, eternal state, beyond the range of words (vāggocarātīta) which is the Great Seal. Here YRM exhibits great clarity of expression: the Great Seal is experienced, hence "one makes it an object of perception" (ālambanīkaroti); however, the process by which it becomes an object of perception cannot in itself be an object of experience (anālambana), for as we have seen (HVT II.iv.45), the Great Seal is Simultaneously-arisen, it manifests itself "without any interval" (anantaram, YRM). To this final state, then, we shall now turn our attention.

IV. Mysticism and the experience of sahaja

We shall now study the actual experience of sahaja, particularly as described in HVT. The various ways in which this text describes the Simultaneously-arisen condition will be arranged under a series of headings as shown below[145].

We are, first of all, warned that as to the actual experience of sahaja,

(1) *it is ineffable*,

that is to say, words convey no accurate idea of what it is: "it surpasses the scope of words" (I.viii.51). Hence "By no other may it be told, and from no-one may it be received" (I.viii.36). Thus it can only be "experienced by oneself" (svasaṃvedya)[146] (I.viii.46,51; ix.3; x.8), and may in this way be "known intuitively" (I.viii.36). The experience is said to be "like a maiden's (first experience of) sexual bliss"[147] or "like the dream of a fool" (II.v.70) – both very apt images, the first pointing to the difference between this experience and anything experienced before, the second to the impossibility of giving a satisfactory, coherent account of it.

Yet here, as in all other religious traditions, we find that in fact quite a lot has been said about that which is claimed to be beyond words. The most guarded expression, perhaps, is that "like the sky it is pure and void" (I.x.9), or that it is "calm" (nistaraṅga, lit. "without waves") (I.x.34, 36) and "undifferentiated" (I.x.36). But more frequently, positive statements are made, for instance to the effect that

(2) *it is blissful*.

This is underlined by the very term sahajananda, "Simultaneously-arisen *Joy*", which we have already discussed. It is also referred to as "Great *Bliss*" (mahāsukha) (I.viii.5, 46; II.ii.34, 59; iii.2, 22; v.68) – a term which is extremely common in other texts. It is referred to simply as "bliss" (saukhya, sukha) (I.v.21), or as "the highest delight" (paramarati) (I.x.33). In this connection we may also note the various passages, translated above, discussing the relationship between the bliss experienced in the course of the first three consecrations and the Simultaneously-arisen bliss.

Not only is it blissful, but like that instant in profane life in which love reaches its climax,

(3) *it is timeless*,

or, which amounts to the same, eternal. "Seeking after the Great Symbol, he will gain thereby that eternal state (sātatyam)" (I.viii.43); "This is . . . the great bliss, perfect and eternal" (II.ii.59). – In M 4.1 the Great Seal is explicitly stated to be kāla-rahitā, "unconnected with time". – Time being abolished, there is nothing one may not know; hence

(4) *it is a state of omniscience*.

This fact is expressed in various ways. It is "knowledge" (jñāna) (I.viii.49; x.32), "great knowledge" (mahājñāna) (I.i.12; II.iii.24), "perfect knowledge of all elements-of-existence" (sarvadharmaparijñāna) (I.viii.44), or it is said to consist of "the knowledge that pertains to the Omniscient Ones", i.e. the Buddhas (sarvajñajñāna) (I.viii.51). Hence "the Simultaneously-arisen is called Awakening (bodhi)" (I.x.17).

What is the object of this knowledge, or, to employ a word which carries something of the same religious implications as jñāna (and is derived from the same Indo-European root), of this "gnosis"? Properly speaking, it has no object,

for it is "knowledge, free from the ideas of self and other" (I.x.8). For one of the most important aspects of the Simultaneously-arisen state is that

(5) *it is an abolition of the duality of subject and object.*

This is, of course, one of the basic postulates of all tantric Buddhism, and is expressed in a great variety of ways, employing cosmological, physiological, sexual and other symbols: it is the unity of lalanā and rasanā, the two subsidiary psychic-veins, of Lotus and Vajra, of sun and moon, of Thought-of-Enlightenment and blood, of the Yamunā and Gaṅgā, of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa, etc., or, in brief, of Wisdom and Means[148]. "The conjunction ... of lunar disk and solar disk, is the great bliss" (I.viii.4). Speaking of the Simultaneously-arisen Joy, HVT states that "there is neither saṃsāra nor nirvāṇa. It is the great and perfect bliss, where there is neither self nor other" (II.v.68), or "the essence, pure and consisting in knowledge, where there is not the slightest difference between saṃsāra and nirvāṇa" (I.x.32). The abolition of the dichotomy of subject and object is also expressed in terms of the various sense-faculties: "In reality there is neither form nor seer, neither sound nor hearer etc. ... neither thought nor thinker" (I.v.i); "no smell, no sound, no form, no taste" (I.ix.20). In short, "there is neither object nor subject" (I.x.33), hence "there is neither meditator, nor whatso'er to meditate" (I.v.11), for "nothing is mentally produced in the highest bliss, and no-one produces it" (I.x.33). – Before proceeding, we may note that it is already quite clear that "bliss", "omniscience", "abolition of duality", are simply one and the same. To say that they are "interdependent" or even "aspects" of the one experience, would be to separate them, for there is only "a single substance of the one same flavour" (samarasam) (I.viii.40).

With many different images HVT makes it clear that

(6) *it is cosmic.*

"It is the origin of all that is ... it is there that the threefold world arises" (I.viii.39); "it is the life (prāṇa) of living things ... all-pervading" (I.x.10), "the stuff the world is made of ... the universal consciousness, the primeval *puruṣa, Isvara, ātman, jiva, sattva, kāla, pudgala*"[149] (I.x.11–12). "This bliss is ... all things moving and unmoving" (II.ii.32); "Whatever things there are, moving and motionless, all these things am I"[150] (I.viii.39). "The whole of existence arises in me ... by me pervaded is this all" (I.viii.41). "Whatsoever things there are, whether moving or motionless ... they are conceived of as the supreme essence (tattvam) and possessing the nature that one possesses oneself. In them there is just one without a second, great bliss which can only be experienced by oneself" (I.viii.45–46). – One notes how the last passage speaks of "identity-with-cosmos", "abolition-of-duality", "experience-of-bliss", and "ineffability" in one breath, to which, as we have seen, "knowledge" and "timelessness" could have been added. In short, "the world is pervaded by bliss" (II.ii.35), or "The whole world is the Simultaneously-arisen, for the Simultaneously-arisen is its essence" (II.ii.44). Duality being abolished, no further explanation can be expected, beyond the fact that "at that moment knowledge ... assumes one form together with the heavens, hells, and abodes of men" (I.viii.52–53), to which a comment-

ary adds the following explanation: "At the moment of the arising of the Simultaneously-arisen, everything assumes its nature, and there is none of the conflict of a twofold nature"[151].

Yet the authors of HVT must have felt that this experience could by no means be reduced to an identification with the universe, and felt compelled to caution that

(7) *it transcends the universe.*

"Great knowledge abides in the body, but although it pervades all things and exists in the body, it is not in the body that it arises" (I.i.12). It is "the essence of all things and yet free of all things" (I.x.18). And as we have already noted, "the Simultaneously-arisen (Joy) exists not in these three (preceding Joys)" (I.x.15).

Finally – and to the significance of this one can hardly attach too much importance –

(8) *it is sacred.*

This is powerfully expressed in the awesome figure of *Hevajra*, who is, as Snellgrove has rightly pointed out[152], regarded by the Buddhists "as real in the beginning, more real that flesh and blood ... In fact, the very power of these gods as means of purification (*viśuddhi*) resides in the initial belief that they instilled ... as pure symbol they would be powerless." The apparition of Hevajra is indeed a *mysterium tremendum*, and his figure is vividly described in HVT (I.iii.13–15; II.v.7–12). As Means, Hevajra is nothing but existence in its "purified" form, i.e. existence as it is when its essential Buddha-nature has been disclosed – "Of Buddha-nature is this world" (I.ix.4). And this Buddha-nature is, as we have seen, identical with Simultaneously-arisen Joy (I.x.17). Thus Hevajra says of himself that "The Simultaneously-arisen Joy I am in essence" (II.v.3) as well as "the essence of all forms" (II.v.2).

To acquire Buddhahood is, indeed, the goal of all Buddhism, and the Buddha-nature forms the basis of all Buddhist conceptions of sacrality. Thus when "the yogin wanders ... in possession of a nature that is common to all beings" (I.vi.23), it must be realized that "All beings are buddhas" (II.iv.69), and that "There is no being that is not enlightened, if it but knows its own true nature. The denizens of hell, the *pretas* and the animals, gods and men and titans, even the worms upon the dung-heap, are eternally blissful in their true nature" (II.iv.73–74). – To render this blissful Buddha-nature manifest is the purpose of tantric sādhana, whether externalised in rites or internalised in yoga.

There is one aspect of the ultimate experience, so vividly described in HVT, which is hardly touched on in this text. We have seen that it is described as in some way embracing the entire cosmos; but, as is made very clear in other texts, it is also, and perhaps essentially, the shining forth of that unlimited "luminosity" (prabhāsvara) which is nothing but one's own true consciousness or mind (citta). Thus

(9) *it is the luminosity of one's own mind.*

HVT states that "the mind (citta) itself is the perfect buddha" (II.iv.75), but says nothing of luminosity. However, according to PK (I.43), the consciousness

is itself luminosity (vijñānaṃ ca prabhāsvaram), and it is the same Luminosity which is the source of all phenomenal existence – the world emerges from it as suddenly and spontaneously as a fish jumps out of the water of a river (PK V.31). Thus there is ultimately no difference between the experience of the luminosity of the consciousness and the experience of identity with the world; but there is, nevertheless, a clear tendency to connect this luminosity with the highest of the bodily cakras, the Lotus of Great Bliss situated in the head. For this cakra, Luminosity sometimes (as in M) functions as a synonym[153]. Thus Luminosity, identified both with Simultaneously-arisen Joy (M 2.2) and with the mind (citta) (33.4)[154], is said to be "hidden in the body" (18.2), and the relative Thought-of-Enlightenment is said to "contain the cause of Luminosity" (18.4).

This experience of sahaja may be interpreted within a broader phenomenological context.

In his book *Mysticism and Philosophy* (London 1961), W. T. Stace has suggested that the following seven points are common to all or at least most "mystical" experiences, which he for purposes of classification divides into the two basic types of "extrovertive" and "introvertive"[155]:

Extrovertive mystical states	*Introvertive mystical states*
1. Unifying vision – all things perceived as One.	1. Unitary consciousness, void of conceptual or sensuous content.
2. The One permeates all things as "life", "consciousness", etc.	2. Non-spatial, non-temporal

Common to both types
3. Sense of objectivity or reality.
4. Blessedness, peace, etc.
5. Feeling that what is apprehended is sacred.
6. Paradoxicality.
7. Alleged to be ineffable.

If we accept these criteria as valid and sufficient to identify an experience as "mystical"[156], it will immediately appear that the experience of sahaja, of Simultaneously-arisen Joy, is a typical example of a "mystical" experience, and, consequently, that tantric Buddhism, which with all its ritualistic paraphernalia only serves to clear the ground, so to speak, for the Simultaneously-arisen Joy, may be characterised as "mysticism". The importance of this conclusion is obvious, for in spite of its many "exotic" traits, tantric Buddhism immediately becomes more readily intelligible when it has been established that it is nothing but another variant of a universal and fundamental aspect of man's religious experience.

We may note that the experience of sahaja – whether this term or synonymous terms like Great Bliss, Buddhahood, etc. are used – is both extrovertive and introvertive. It is *extrovertive*, everything being seen as One – "there is only

a single substance of the one same flavour." (HVT I.viii.40); the mystic identifies himself, as we have seen, with "all things, moving and unmoving". The one, the Essence, with which the mystic merges, is "the life of living things" (I.x.10) – the word which is used, prāṇa, signifies the biological life-force itself. It is the Buddha-nature, and "Of Buddha-nature is this world" (I.ix.4). In this identification with the cosmos, there is, indeed, more than "a hint of immoriality"[157] – in the exultant words of one of the authors of OG, "Say how Kāṇha should cease to exist! He incessantly shines forth, merged in the three worlds" (42.2).

At the same time, the experience is *introvertive*. It is "without discursive thought" (nirvikalpaka), it is a condition of "enstasis" (samādhi) in which the sense-faculties no longer occupy themselves with the objects of sense (SP 5); it is an effulgence (prabhāsvara) of consciousness (citta). Thus the experience of sahaja provides a clear confirmation of Stace's assertion (p.67) that "mystics in general do not distinguish between the introvertive One and the extrovertive One". And how indeed could they? The experience is non-dual (advaya), free from the notion of subject and object, hence also free from the distinctions of "inner" and "outer".

From the experience of *unity* follows the *paradoxicality* of the experience, for as Stace has pointed out, logic depends on multiplicity[158]. The paradoxicality of the mystic experience has been characterised by Stace as "the vacuum-plenum paradox" (p.163), i.e. it is simultaneously described in positive as well as negative terms. This he formulates as follows (ibid.):

Positive Aspects (plenum)	*Negative Aspects* (vacuum)
a) has qualities	has no qualities
b) is personal	is impersonal
c) is dynamic, creative, active	is static, motionless, inactive

This analysis fits our case extraordinarily well. The Essence a) "is replete with all forms", yet it is "Emptiness" (SP 31). b) It is personified in the figure of Hevajra, or in the union of Hevajra and Nairātmyā, and "this unity is known as Vairocana, Akṣobhya, Amogha, Ratna, Ārolika, and Sātvika, as Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Śiva, Sarva, Vibuddha, and Tattva" (HVT I.v.12) – yet it is, equally clearly, impersonal ("Essence", "Non-duality", etc.). c) Finally, it is dynamic, it is "the source of the world" and "the life of living things"; but it is also static, it "does not come from anywhere, nor does it go anywhere, nor does it remain in any place" (SP 30). – It is difficult to regard paradoxicality as anything but yet another expression of ineffability, and our texts frequently prefer the way of negation rather than that of affirmation. "The yogin gains fulfilment in that which is no fulfilment, for its characteristic is the very absence of any characteristic" (HVT I.x.20). We are warned (SP 2) that even to say of the Essence that it is "eternal" or "bliss" is nothing but a mental construction (saṅkalpa). As YRM

(p. 108) subtly observes, the final mystical rapture may be perceived, but not the process (yoga) by which it comes about[159].

In an article criticizing Stace's book, J. Findlay has stressed that "mysticism is essentially a frame of mind connected with an *absolute* of some sort"[160], and proceeds to give a definition of an "absolute" which he claims is characterized by the following features: (1) it is "irremmovable and necessarily existent and self-existent", it has "uniquenness and singleness"; (2) it "shows forth absolutely every type of excellence . . . in a fashion so transcendent that it can . . . be rather said to *be* all these types of excellence . . . the sole cause for their presence in any finite case" (p. 153). As far as we are concerned, this definition only serves to complete the one given by Stace, for once again, it is immediately evident that sahaja, the Spontaneously-arisen Joy, is precisely such an "absolute". It is "irremovable" (akṣara, cf. the passages translated from ST) and "self-existent" (svayambhūmāna, SP 9), and as we have seen, "Shows forth every type of excellence" (sarvākāravaropeta). This is, I think, significant, for it is precisely in its capacity of being an "absolute" that the Simultaneously-arisen Joy transcends all other types of experience, no matter how deceptively similar they may appear to be, and thus provides tantric Buddhism with its profound *religious* dimension.

A few points remain to be discussed. The first concerns the *knowledge* or "gnosis" (jñāna) which accompanies, or rather, is an integral part of, the mystic experience as described in our texts. For it is, indeed, an integral part; and it is rather surprising that Stace has not included it among the criteria he posits for the mystic experience[161]. It is of cource not a knowledge about "something", duality being abolished; in this sense, the mystic experience is noncognitive. Yet it is an infinite expansion of the yogin's perception of reality, "a knowledge of creation . . . so perfect and intoxicating that no tongue could express it"[162]. The very term bodhi, "Awakening", fully testifies to this.

Secondly, as a result of this "gnosis", the experience leads to a permanent change in the adept. The experience itself is timeless; yet when the yogin returns to the realm of time, he is not the same as he was before. It is not a case of merely transforming "idealistically the whole of phenomenal existence into a mystic absolute"[163], but of truly seeing saṃsāra and nirvāṇa hence-forth as *one*. "Such as is *saṃsāra*, such is *nirvāṇa*. There is no *nirvāṇa* other than *saṃsāra*, we say" (HVT II.iv.32). "The wise man continues in saṃsāra, but this *saṃsāra* is recognized as *nirvāṇa*" (ibid., 34). This state of "two-in-one" is technically known as *yuganaddha*, "bound to the (same) yoke", the image presumably being that of two oxen or horses, saṃsāra and nirvāṇa, yoked side by side. Numerous descriptions of the perfected yogin, roaming the world in the absolute freedom of yuganaddha, are to be found in tantric literature: "Whatever demon should appear before him, even though it be the peer of Indra, he would have no fear, for he wanders like a lion" (HVT I.vi.25). Several passages in HVT allude to this state of spiritual freedom (I.vi.18–26; II.ii.11–12; ii.41–49), and Chap. VI (*Yuganaddhakrama*) of PK is wholly devoted to a description of the liberated yogin. For the sake of illustration I translate some ślokas from this chapter:

(2) When, avoiding the two notions of 'samsara' and 'nirvana', they are made one, then it is called yuganaddha.
(4) The yogin who wanders, having combined the notion of 'form' and 'formless', knows yuganaddha.
(5) When there is no dual concept of 'object' and 'subject', but only nonseparation, then it is called yuganaddha.
(6) He who lives, having abandoned the two concepts of 'eternity' and 'dissolution', that wise one knows the Essence which is called yuganaddha
(10) The separation from the notion of 'non-self of the person' and 'non-self of the elements' is the characteristic of yuganaddha.
(13) When, having known the relative and absolute each by itself according to their division, there is a commingling of both, then it is called yuganaddha.
(16) For whom there at no time is contemplation or non-contemplation – that yogin, remaining in yuganaddha, is free from existence and non-existence.
(19) Having rendered both cause and effect inseparable according to their own nature – that condition of the yogin is yuganaddha, the Buddhas say.
(23) The yogin who thus remains fixed in the state of yuganaddha, he is said to be omniscient, a seer of the Essence, sustainer of the universe.
(24) Fully seeing through the net of māyā, having crossed over the sea of saṃsāra, having done what is to be done, the great yogin remains in the cessation of the two (modes of) truth.
(25) This indeed is non-dual knowledge, non-supported cessation, buddhahood, vajrasattva-hood, and also omnipotence.
(30) As to oneself, thus to one's enemy; as wife, thus daughter; as mother, thus servant-girl; as ḍombī, thus twice-born woman.
(31) As clothes, thus skin; as jewel, thus chaff; as urine, thus excrements; as rice, thus dung.
(32) As sweet-smelling camphor, thus stench from excreta; as a voice singing praises, thus a voice which is repulsive.
(33) As demon, thus holder-of-Vajra; as night, thus day; as dream, thus that which is seen; as that which is destroyed thus that which remains.
(34) As bliss, thus pain; as villain, thus son; as hell, thus heaven, as evil, thus good.

This type of description of the radical freedom of the accomplished yogin is of course well-known in Indian religious literature; one need only, to quote but one example, point to the 19th and 20th songs of the *Aṣṭāvakragītā*[164].

N. Smart has submitted the various types of accounts of mystical experiences to a critical analysis[165], and has suggested that these accounts be divided into four categories, viz. auto-interpretation with a low or with a high degree of ramification, and hetero-interpretation, likewise with a low or with a high degree of ramification. By "ramification" Smart means interpretation, use of symbolic language, theological terms, etc. It seems to me that the accounts of the mystical

experience to be found in the Buddhist tantric literature which we have studied exhibit clear instances of "auto-interpretation with a low degree of ramification", and that they for that reason should be of considerable interest to anyone undertaking a comparative study of mysticism. If we examine, for instance, the various headings proposed in the previous chapter for the description found in HVT of the mystic state, one is struck by the fact that only a few of them can be said to point to specifically *Buddhist* "ramifications".

In fact, the uniqueness of Buddhist tantricism is not, I would suggest, to be found in the mystic experience to which the yogin aspires, but in the *ritual* which – as a "means-of-approach" (upāya), i.e. as a preliminary procedure – plays a fundamental part in the whole tantric scheme of salvation. This is true whether the ritual was actually performed, or whether it was conceived as an interiorised process, for in the latter case, the basic categories of the process of consecration (the succession of Four Joys, for instance) were nevertheless retained. Thus its insistence – and dependence – on *ritual* places Buddhist tantricism in a rather unique position compared to the mysticism of other religious traditions. This ritual is described in frankly – often grossly – sexual terms; in it, in fact, we have an instance of a *hieros gamos* described with a sense of elaborate detail and a psychological insight and subtlety which is absolutely without parallell in the history of religions. Yet it is a hieros gamos utterly void of connection with "fertility" of any kind; its sole legitimation resides in the restoration of the wholeness – or, which is the same thing, the "holiness" – of the Buddha-nature, the unity of Wisdom and Means[166]. In the Buddha-nature the duality of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa is perceived to be illusive, and the timelessness of their perfect unity is realized in the mystic rapture, as described in a remarkable Buddhist version of the motif of the bride and bridegroom, the *Premapañcaka* ("Five Stanzas of Love"), in which the unio mystica of Wisdom and Means, although envisaged as a wholly interiorised process, is nevertheless expressed, with complete faithfulness, in terms of the exterior ritual of consecration (AVS p.58):

> "If there was no beloved bridegroom, i.e. 'reflection' in the form of origination-in-dependence, the loving bride, the Void, would be regarded as no better than dead[167].
>
> The Void is the much-beloved bride, unequalled in beauty; and were he separated from her, the beloved bridegroom would be fettered.
>
> Therefore the two, bride and bridegroom, trembling come before the preceptor who of his innate kindness creates between the two spontaneous, mutual love[168].
>
> Such is the cleverness and extraordinary skill of the true preceptor – the vital-breath – that the two become indestructible (nirāvedhya)[169], non-dependent, and supreme, both having plentitude of all characteristics, both free from the four pairs of opposites, both having the nature of all things – yet always said themselves to be without a nature of their own!"

Notes

1 The term yāna is somewhat out of place when referring to the various aspects of tantricism; the distinction between Sahajayāna, Kālacakrayāna, and Vajrayāna is quite artificial.
2 Such is the terminology of e.g. S. B. Dasgupta, ORC p. 13–14 et seq. dealing with the "Buddhist Sahajiyā Cult".
3 A commendable but not entirely satisfactory attempt has been made by Dasgupta in the sub-chapter "The Idea of Sahaja", ORC p. 77–86.
4 Les Chants Mystiques, passim.
5 HVT passim.
6 Yoga, p. 268, has "Innate". The French original has "non-conditionné".
7 H. Guenther, The Royal Song of Saraha. A Study in the History of Buddhist Thought, Seattle 1969, p.9 n.14.
8 However, sahaja is used as a noun designating the Absolute, God, etc. in a poet like Kabīr, as well as in Sikhism etc. See C. Veaudeville, *Kabir granthavali (Doha)*, Publ. de l'Inst. Française d'Indologie No. 12, Pondichery 1957, p.xviii–xx.
9 Cf. Lessing and Wayman's translation "together-born" (FBT p. 323) and W. Y. Evans-Wentz "simultaneously-born", Tibetan Yoga and Secret Doctrines, 2nd. ed., London 1958, p. 205 n.2.
10 See in particular HVT I.ii and xi, passim: II.v.38–47; x, passim.
11 HVT I.x.2–5, 21–29 and CMT Chap. II passim describe the external laying out of the maṇḍala. AVS p.40–43 (translated by Snellgrove in Buddhist Texts Through the Ages, Oxford 1954, p.249–52) gives an account of the evolving of an internal maṇḍala. HVT II.v.4–37, 48–57 could be understood both ways.
12 G. Tucci, The Theory and Practice of the Mandala, London 1961.
13 I reproduce Snellgrove's translation, HVT Part I, p. 131.
14 Thus Carelli, ST p.5 and passim.
15 Thus translated by Lessing and Wayman, FBT passim; however, their translation is of the Tibetan term dbaṅ bskur-ba, lit. "conferring of power".
16 See Snellgrove, HVT Part I p.131. For a discussion of this theme, see D. L. Snellgrove, "The Notion of Divine Kingship in Tantric Buddhism", in: The Sacral Kingship, Studies in the History of Religions vol.IV, Leiden 1959, p.204–18. – For a study of divine kingship in the wider context of Indian religion, see J. Gonda, Ancient Indian Kingship From the Religious Point of View, Leiden 1969.
17 The term is used by Tucci, Theory and Practice, p.44.
18 For further descriptions of the consecrations and of the ritual of the maṇḍala in general, see, besides the work just quoted by Tucci, M. Eliade, Yoga, p.219–27, with extensive bibliography p.408–09.
19 ST p.29. Cf. HVT I.vi.10 "Then the yogin, self-collected, performs the dance in the place of Hevajra", and CMT p.54–55.
20 However, note that unless it vanishes of its own accord, it is to be "undone" by a special rite called āveśopaśamana, lit. pacification of the state of possession".
21 Translation of the relevant passage is found in HVT Part I, p.131–32.
22 Ibid.
23 ST p.27.
24 The assimilation of a female breast with a jar is conventional in Sanskrit, cf. expressions like kuca-kumbha, stana-kalaśa etc.
25 Further titles are given HVT I.v.2, 16–18; II.v.59; vii.11. The term mudrā will be discussed in Chap. III.
26 Carelli's ed. has śabdā, certainly a corruption, perhaps for * sodaśābdā as the suitable mudrā is elsewhere (p.32) stated to be dvādaśābdā. The texts differ as to the age of the Seal, see Wayman, "Female Energy." in particular p. 105–10.

27 Carelli's ed. has viúddhā "pure", but as this hardly makes sense, I emend to avi°, "impure", which the original Ms may well have had, as there probably was no space between (a)vi° and the preceding word ending in -ā.

28 This thought is repeated with slight variations throughout the tantric literature, cf. for instance PK IV.16: "And by that very mind (cittena) with which fools are bound in saṃsāra, by that same mind yogins attain the condition of buddhahood", and JS I.15 (p.32): "By that action due to which living beings are tormented in the terrible hell for hundreds of myriads of kalpas, by that same (action) the yogin gains release".

29 Carelli, Introduction p. 34 erroneously takes sa eva to refer to guhyābhiṣeko of the following line.

30 The text surprisingly has trastā "trembling", which previously (p.21) was listed as one of the characteristics of an unsuitable Seal.

31 "Secret" (guhya) is a conventional term, in tantric as well as non-tantric literature, of the sexual organ. However, a number of available sources give different explanations of the term guhya in the present context. Thus YRM states that "this experience is the Secret Consecration because it cannot be explained to yogins in terms of diffuse mental concepts" (Snellgrove's translation, HVT Part I, p.132); another commentary to HVT, the *Netravibhaṅga* of Dharmakīrti, says that "The Secret Consecration is so called, because it is a secret from the śrāvakas, pratyekabuddhas and all those below them" (Snellgrove's translation, HVT Part I, p.95 n.1). Finally, FBT p.321 gives the following explanation: "Lexicons say it is called "secret" (guhya) because it is the initiation obtained from tasting the secret substance". It will be noted that these various explanations are not mutually exclusive.

32 "Moon" is a universal symbol for semen virile in yogic and tantric literature. In Buddhist tantric literature it is a synonym for bodhicitta, i.e. the Thought-of-Enlightenment – it must be remembered that in the tantras the Thought-of-Enlightenment is at all times regarded as both relative (material, concrete) and absolute (transcendent, the source of Bliss, etc.), cf. HVT I.viii.29 "In man there is this twofold nature, śukra (relative) and the bliss arising from it (absolute)" – śukra being the conventional term for semen virile, interchangeable with bodhicitta.

33 I thus translate amṛta, which is always envisaged as a liquid. It is synonymous with bodhicitta, and shares its ambiguity. The Buddhist concept of the Thought-of-Enlightenment thus merges with the older Vedic concept of soma being the drink of the gods (amṛta), being stored in the moon (later soma acquires the sense of "moon" outright), being the seed of the heavenly bull, etc.

34 Cf. HVT II.viii.3–5 translated above.

35 The female partner of Hevajra, see HVT passim.

36 Kiñjalka normally signifies "the filament of a plant, especially of a lotus", Perhaps it means "the throat" in the present context, cf. Tucci, Theory and Practice p.89: "OṂ. AḤ, HŪṂ are placed respectively on the head, the throat and heart"; p.94 id. However, I suspect that its tantric use is that of "lotus", cf. the following passage, quoted from the *Nirnādatantra* (a non-Buddhist tantra), in AVS p.28: "This jewel-City (ratnapuram i.e. lotus, bhaga, etc., cf. HVT II.iii.4 "Jewel-Casket", ratnakaraṇḍaka), o Goddess, situated in the kiñjalka, is to come to a state of fire".

37 In tantric texts, Vajra conventionally signifies the male sexual organ, Lotus the female. See for instance HVT Part I p.140 under *vajra*. – "The host of Buddhas" can only refer to the bodhicitta, i.e. the Thought-of-Enlightenment which is indeed the essence of all the Buddhas.

38 "Sprinkles" (sicyate) is used here in the sense of "impregnates" (with the undertone, no doubt, of "consecrates"). Śukra may refer either (and most frequently) to semen, but also to the female fluid, cf. HVT I.viii.29 ("... in woman too it is the same, śukra

and the bliss arising from it"). Being identical with the Thought-of-Enlightenment, śukra shares its twofold nature. – In the present passage, reference is possible to either male or female śukra. Cf. HVT I.x.6 "A yoginī is resorted to (sevyate), so long as she possesses śukra". In the light of HSP (sicyate instead of HVT sevyate), Snellgrove's translation, while possible, is not, however, necessary. Cf. HVT II.iii.63 "These are the Mudrās, bestowers of siddhi; adamantine is their śukra".

39 The same mantra is found in HVT II.xii.2, on the basis of which the corrupt forms ātmanas (for atītais) and caturdhārayā (for citta-) in HSP may be corrected. Finot's translation must be corrected accordingly. His emendation of sikto 'si to siktāsi may be rejected. – Likewise on the basis of HVT II.xii.5, Finot's version padmamukhādhāreti may be corrected, not, as he suggests, to° mukha-dhare iti, but to padma sukhādhāreti.

40 Cf. HVT I.x.7 "The product of the service rendered one drops into the disciple's mouth"; II.iii.14 "Then with thumb and fourth finger he drops the bindu into the pupil's mouth"; HVT II.iv.39 "With his tongue he must receive the ambrosia (amṛta)".

41 Nirambaravarāṅgā may also (cf. the passages translated from ST p. 21 and 22) be understood as "(a woman) having the sexual organ uncovered".

42 Makaranda ("honey, nectar") can in the present context only be a synonym for śukra.

43 I am not certain that these lines are, as Finot suggested, "une citation tronquée de quelque stance èrotique" (p.47). Granted that is not altogether clear, it can yet, without forcing it, be made to make sense within the context of the Consecration of the Secret. Finot's emendation of °ambare to °ambarena may be rejected.

44 Lessing and Wayman here translate "the ring fingers". However, mtheb-srin is quite clear: thumb and fourth finger. Cf.n.40 above.

45 On the five so-called Buddha-families, see Snellgrove, Buddhist Himalaya, Oxford 1957, p.64–67, 74–75.

46 All this refers to the preceding consecration.

47 Vajrasattva (lit. "adamantine being") is the tantric version of the universal Buddha. Ultimately it is identical with Great Bliss etc., which will be dealt with below.

48 The remainder of the passage is not clear to me.

49 I.e. the preliminary consecrations, cf. Fig.1.

50 I translate svādhiṣṭhitā "blessed by himself", cf. HVT Part 1 p.133. Presumably this refers to the union of preceptor and Seal of the preceding consecration. HVT II.iv.36 employs svābhiṣiktām in the same context. Alternatively it could refer to the impressing of mantras on the body of the Seal at the beginning of the Consecration of the Secret.

51 The same mantra is found HVT II.xii.3.

52 Finot's ed. has sthānadām which is supported by the Tibetan translation of HVT (gnas sbyin-ma), but siddhidām, found in all MSS of HVT, gives better sense. YRM (p.159) has sthāna°.

53 For a discussion of the term Gnosis-Being (jñānasattva), see Tucci, Theory and Practice, p.95–96.

54 The meaning of this passage (śiṣyacitte praveśayet) is not quite clear to me. Perhaps one may emend to °cittaṃ pra° "he lets the citta of the disciple enter (the Lotus of the Seal?)".

55 Cf. n.37.

56 That there are two Seals is shown by the dual form mudrābhyām. Usually, as in PVS (Snellgrove's translation p.245), there appears to be only one. However, it is clear that there may for that matter be many Seals involved: "If there are ten Seals, then commit that one to the disciple in whom he is able to arouse passion" (ST p.24–25).

57 Presumably the preceptor.
58 Upāya, "Means", is the male partner, the female being "Wisdom"; together they constitute the fullness of the Buddha-nature.
59 Bindu, "drop", is used synonymously with bodhicitta, śukra, etc. See n. 32 and 33 and HVT Part I p.135.
60 Buddhist Texts Through the Ages, p.240–46.
61 FBT p.319, however, speaking of the Consecration of the Secret, states that "according to the Kālacakra, initiation is obtained in a *bhagamaṇḍala*, but this is a special feature of that Tantra, which sets forth the initiation of the disciple by way of displaying to him the *bhaga*, and such a thing is not set forth in other Tantras." This is directly relevant to ST which is a commentary to the chapter on consecrations of the *Kālacakratantra*.
62 Bharati, The Tantric Tradition, p. 11.
63 Hasting's Encyclopædia of Religions and Ethics, vol. XII, p. 196, 2, Edinburgh 1921.
64 Cf. the entering of "the host of Buddhas situated in space" into the Vajra of the preceptor at the same occasion, spoken of by HSP.
65 HVT Part I, p. 34.
66 Ibid. p. 40.
67 L. de la Vallée Poussin, in the article quoted above, was fully aware that "a number of speculations, beliefs, and practices which reach their full development in the Tāntrik or last period of Buddhism were not unknown during the former period" (p. 194, 1). On maithuna in pre-tantric Buddhism, see Eliade, Yoga, p. 258.
68 My translation presupposes the emendation of saṃvṛtyā to *saṃvṛttyā, prompted by de la Vallée Poussin's gloss lokavyavahārataḥ, see Eliade, Yoga, p. 262. But one might perhaps retain saṃvṛtyā "according to relative (truth)".
69 This refers to the "triple division of knowledge" (jñānatrayaprabheda) of verse 36, explained in verses 37–39: "By the coming together of the two organs, i.e. the union of Vajra and Lotus, comes the union, known as the coming-together (samāpatti), of the twofold knowledge. And the knowledge which through effort is obtained by the coming-together of the twofold knowledge in the manner which has been described, is (known as) ālokopalabdha (i.e. the third knowledge)".
70 I emend tām evaṃ to tām eva in accordance with the commentary. Tām refers to verse 36: "Of all illusions, that of woman is the greatest", "the illusion of woman" being explained by the commentary (p. 34) simply as "woman" (strīmāyā strī eva). This, however, must be understood in the light of the preceding verse 13 (p. 27) where the first void is given the terminus technicus "woman". See the following note.
71 A discussion of the basic ideas of this chapter of PK will be found in Dasgupta, ORC p. 45–46 and Introduction p. 51–54.
72 The mentally-created mudrā, further discussed in Chap. III.
73 In adopting this translation of sampradāya (usually "doctrine, tradition"), I follow the interpretation of de la Vallée Poussin, see Eliade, Yoga, p. 261.
74 This void, being the third, corresponds to the third Consecration. See n. 10.
75 Corresponds to the first void, se n. 10.
76 Corresponds to the triple division of knowledge discussed in n. 8. For the terms "passion" etc., cf. also HVT 1. viii. 35 and II.vi.8.
77 Numerous instances of interiorized interpretations as found in Buddhist tantric literature are given by Wayman, "Female Energy", particularly p. 79 and p. 100 et seq. – For Hindu tantric texts, similar figurative interpretations are quoted by Eliade, Yoga, p.248; p.262–63.
78 I.e. a physical woman, see Chap. III.

79 The Tibetan text has dṅos-kyi rig-ma las-rgya-la brten-nas which I take to express identity between the Action-Seal and the Wisdom, and not, as Lessing and Wayman translate, "the Action-Seal of a concrete 'wisdom' ".

80 See note 72 and the following chapter.

81 See Eliade, Yoga, p. 254–67. For the Vaishnava sahajiyā movement, see M. M. Basu, The Post-Caitanya Sahajiyā Cult of Bengal, Calcutta 1930, and E. C. Dimmock. Jr., The Place of the Hidden Moon, Chicago 1966, p. 234–45 where the *Nāyikāsādhanaṭīkā*, a text describing the actual ritual, is translated.

82 For a translation of a modern ritual manual (the *Vāmamārga*), see Bharati, The Tantric Tradition, p. 244–65.

83 Commentary to verse 25 of TDK, Bagchi p. 68.

84 See for example Eliade, Yoga, p. 341–53.

85 Translation by. E. Senart, Paris 1934 (Collection Emile Senart, vol.III), p. 107.

86 Translation by, E. Senart, Paris 1930 (Coll. E. Senart, vol. I), p. 22.

87 S. Lèvi, La doctrine du sacrifice dans les Brāhmaṇas, Paris 1898, p. 107.

88 On "ritual interiorization", see Eliade, Yoga, p. 111–114, and (Index) p. 501 for further references.

89 Tucci, Rati-Līlā, p. 44.

90 Eliade, Yoga, p. 249–251.

91 In Sanskrit the word for "truth" (satya) is derived from the root as- "to be".

92 This refers to the conventional lists of marks characterizing a Buddha, with whom śukra (under its dual aspect of relative and absolute) is identified.

93 Bharati, The Tantric Tradition, p. 179; likewise Eliade, Yoga p.267, n.224.

94 Bharati, op.cit. p. 179–180. It is true, as Bharati points out, that ni-viś- does not mean "to discharge"; however, no-one has claimed that it does. However, it certainly means "to enter" and is here in the causative.

95 For a discussion of these correlative sets of concepts, see HVT Part I, p. 27.

96 Except when translating sahaja, I adopt the terminology employed by Snellgrove.

97 This is explicitly confirmed by YRM p. 132, commenting on HVT I.x.13. However, YRM p. 107–108, commenting on I.i.23 et seq., connects all four Joys with each of the first three Consecrations. This entire passage is translated at the end of the present chapter.

98 Snellgrove's translation of svasaṃvedya – "self-experiencing" – may cause misunderstanding. Svasamvedya is an adjective and there does not seem to be any reason why it should not be translated as such. The corresponding noun is svasaṃvedana.

99 I believe Snellgrove is wrong in taking nānātvavarjite kṣaṇe as descriptive of paramānande ("the moment of Perfect Joy which is free from all diversity"). I would prefer the translation "When the pupil has reached Perfect Joy, just then in the moment free from all diversity etc."

100 The correct title of this text, which has no title in Shastri's ed. of AVS, has been established by Snellgrove HVT Part I p. 137 on the basis of the Tibetan translation, found in the Tenjur.

101 In this connection one may note the rendering of viramānanda found in FBT p. 322 1.5 and in the Tibetan translation of M, passim, viz. khyad-par-gyi dga'-ba. Here *vi-* is interpreted as viśiṣṭa, "extraordinary", and *-rama* is either untranslated, or regarded as synonymous with ānanda. The same interpretation is found in a Sanskrit text like YRM, p. 132 1.5 from bottom, commenting HVT I.x. 13: viśiṣṭottamaramo viramaḥ, in which vi- is likewise understood as viṣista, further explained as uttama, "highest". One can therefore understand the term suratānanda, "Joy of coition", used by HVT I.viii.31, cf. n.14.

102 I am at a loss to understand why Snellgrove translates suratānanda as "extreme joy".

103 It is a wide-spread belief in Indian yoga that the male seed is stored in the brain, cf. ORC p.239–44.

104 See for example Eliade, Yoga, p.241–45. Normally, Buddhist tantras only operate with *four* cakras (head, throat, heart, navel), cf. HVT Part I, p. 38. However, schemes involving (at least by implication) five as well six cakras are also known (ibid). Note that the positions of the cakras described by ST do not entirely correspond to that found in Hindu tantras, cf. Eliade, ibid.

105 The Thought-of-Enlightenment, assimilated with the Moon (thus continuing the Vedic assimilation of soma, the drink of immortality, with the Moon) may be divided into fifteen digits (kalā), further divided into three groups of five, each group corresponding in the present text to one of the first three Joys. The Simultaneously-arisen Joy is expressed as the "sixteenth digit", i.e. as transcendent. Cf. HVT II.iv. 25–26: "The last of all must be firmly rejected, for there is no sixteenth phase. And why is that? Because it is non-productive of an effect. The moon with its fifteen phases represents the Thought-of-Enlightenment". The number sixteen is a sacred number, expressing the whole or the immortal part, cf. *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-up*, I.5.14 "The Year is Prajāpati, it has sixteen parts". Note that the Seal is frequently said to be girl "sixteen years of age".

106 The uṣṇīṣa is the cakra situated at the top of the head. It is also well-known in non-tantric Buddhism as one of the marks of a Buddha, represented iconographically as a protruberance on the top of the head.

107 An essentially identical scheme is to be found in FBT p. 323, where there are, however, only five cakras (head, throat, heart, navel, Vajra-Jewel) involved. There is the same stress on the non-emission of the Thought-of-Enlightenment: "After (the candidate's) entering into union, when he takes recourse to drawing the wind into the "middle vein", the melted white element reaches the neck from the middle of the forehead, at which time there is "joy" (ānanda). After that, it reaches the heart, at which time there is "super joy" (parama-ānanda). After that, it reaches the navel, at which time there is "extraordinary joy" (virama-ānanda). After that, it reaches the tip of the thunderbolt gem, and by his abiding by the precept to not allow it to be emitted, at that time there is produced the knowledge of "together-born joy" (sahaja-ānanda)." (Lessing and Wayman's translation).

108 See n. 105.

109 See Chap.II. To cite but one example, see Bharati, The Tantric Tradition, p. 184 n. 62, quoting the *Guhyasiddhi* of Padmavajra.

110 E.g. *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-up*. VI.4.10 (Eliade, Yoga, p. 255). For beliefs and practices connected with the retention of the semen, see Eliade, Yoga, p. 134, 248–49, 270, 406.

111 The entire passage is translated below.

112 On this point opinions seem to vary. Tibetan texts attest to the tradition that *any* coition will produce, however fleetingly, Simultaneously-arisen Joy. See Wayman, "Female Energy" p. 94 (quoting Tsongkhapa), and The Tibetan Book of the Dead, ed. W. Y. Evans-Wentz, London, 3rd ed. 1957, p. 179, which connects the experiencing of the Simultaneously-arisen Joy with the act of conception: "Just at this moment when the sperm and the ovum are about to unite, the Knower experienceth the bliss of the simultaneously-born state, during which state it fainteth away into unconsciousness. (Afterwards) it findeth itself encased in oval form, in the embryonic state".

113 Cf. AVS p. 28 1.4 where vimarda ("consummation") likewise comes fourth, "in repudiation of haṭhayoga" (haṭhayoganirūkṛteḥ). See the following.

114 This may well be a direct reference to HVT II.iii.8. quoted above.

115 HVT Part I, p. 35.

116 If the Four Joys are connected with the four cakras, then the Simultaneously-arisen Joy *must* be the fourth, being connected with the uṣṇīṣa, the cakra of the head, if the march of the Thought-of-Enlightenment is upwards, and not, as in the texts quoted above, *downwards*.

117 This scheme is attested as early as the Vedas, e.g. AV x.7.

118 Cf. FBT p.323, quoted above ("The disciple imagines he has been made to enter into union on account of the vividness in his mind that the body of himself and the vidyā is the desire-god (kāmadeva) in the sense of the 'Father-Mother' union").

119 Carelli's ed. has sparśa-sukha which must be corrected to spanda° cf. ST p.36 and 62. Wayman, "Female Energy" p.79, perhaps mislead by the association of "Realm of Form" (rūpadhātu), translates this passage without making the necessary emendation.

120 Sarvākāravaropeta is frequently used to describe the Void (śūnyatā).

121 My rendering of pradeśika is based on BHSD p.380.

122 Cf HVT I.x.20 "Its characteristic is the absence of any characteristic."

123 "The proof is void of elements which can be grasped by one's own mind" – for the mind cannot grasp itself. This is a basic position in Mahāyāna, elaborated in the Vijñānavāda and given striking expression in Zen. CF. A. Watts, The Way of Zen, p. 154–73.

124 ST p.39 gives these signs as "smoke, mirage, fireflies, lamp, cloudless sky" in due succession. See Wayman, "Female Energy" p.91. Cf. Śvetāśvatara-up. II.11: "Fog, smoke, sun, fire, wind, fireflies, lightning, a crystal, a moon – these are the preliminary appearances which produce the manifestation of Brahman in Yoga" (Hume, p. 398).

125 The significance of this expression is not clear to me. Cf. ST p.39, 1.27: paścāt tad eva dhūmādikaṃ kalpanārahitaṃ pratisenāvad iti/.

126 "The sound EVAM" signifies the Lotus of the Seal. Snellgrove is not correct in his rendering "navel" in HVT II.ii.56. The text has evaṃkāre "in the syllable EVAM", and elsewhere (II.ii.30) EVAM is said to be the symbol for the female sexual organ (strīkakkola, translated somewhat euphemistically by Snellgrove as "lotus-paradise"). Cf. also HVT II.iii.4 and its commentary in the following lines of CMN, translated below.

127 Cf. HVT II.ii.44: "the whole world is simultaneously-arisen".

128 I have emended nispanda to niṣyanda, cf. BHS p.308. Cf. HVT II.iv.56: EVAM-kāre ca nisyandam, and II.iv. 58 yathā kṛtaṃ tathā bhuktaṃ nisyanda iti śabditam. Nisyanda phala is one of the five phalāni ("results"), see BHSD p.396.

129 Nispanda may here be retained in the sense of "immobility". Cf. ST p.36 and 62 where niṣpandasukha and niṣpandākṣarabhāvana are associated with the Great Seal, i.e. with the Simultaneously-arisen Joy.

130 Pravāhanityatvena sahajasvabhāvā yā prajñāyāḥ sahajodayatvena abhinnā yā sā dharmamudrā ity abhidhīyate. My translation of this passage is tentative.

131 HVT II.iv.56 vipākaṃ dharmacakrataḥ; iv.58 "A fruit of retribution is the reverse of this (i.e. of corresponding fruit), where the activity is small and the fruit is great." Vipākaphala is one of the five "results" (phala), cf. BHSD p. 491. Snellgrove HVT II.iv.56 translates vipākaphala "the fruit of retribution". However, vipāka is also the name of the Moment of Perfect Joy, which, being second, corresponds to the Dharma-Seal in the scheme of CMN.

132 Vaimalya ("purity") is not mentioned among the 5 phalāni BHSD p.396, but HVT II.i.v.57 vimalaphala ("the pure fruit") is in the head; II.iv.58 "arises from the purificatory process of yoga" (vaimalyam yoga-śuddhitaḥ).

133 Purusakāra is one of the five "results", cf. BHSD p.348.

134 Explicit identification in M 19, 5.

135 The expression prakṛti-pariśuddha, often used in connection with the avadhūtī, could of course be understood as "naturally pure". However, prakṛti also signifies "matter", or rather, as it is contrasted to prabhāsvara, the "Clear Light", it is "opacity". Cf. PK III.7–26 translated by Dasgupta, ORC p.45–46 and Introduction p.51–54.

136 See n.123.

137 For what appears to be an example of a late speculative scheme in which numerous correspondencies are worked out systematically, cf. the passage from the *Sampuṭikā*, quoted by Dasgupta, Introduction p.123 n.l. – Concepts employing other meanings of the term mudrā than the specifically Buddhist tantric one of "female partner", which may have formed the basis of speculation leading to the fully developed concept of the Four Seals, are the "four Seals which define a Promulgation" (bkar-btags-kyi phyag-rgya bži), FBT p.85. Cf. also passages like "E-Vam is the Buddha, and, in short, the Seal of the doctrine" (ibid. p.71). For a discussion of the word mudrā, see Eliade, Yoga, p.405.

138 See HVT Part I p. 146 (Index) for exhaustive references.

139 Translation: Part I p.131–33, text: Part II p. 107–9. Snellgrove's translation associates the Dharma-Seal with the Fourth Consecration and the Action-Seal with both the first and the second Consecration.

140 In other words, the union with the Seal is consummated by the Master in the first Consecration (cf. HVT II.iii.13 "The Prajñā of sixteen years he clasps within his arms, and from the union of the vajra and the bell the Master's Consecration comes about"). Elsewhere, as we have seen, this union is counted as the second Consecration.

141 The higher of the twofold "process" (krama) which constitutes the "thought-creation" (bhāvanā) just referred to by YRM.

142 This explanation, which in itself seems inappropriate, is added as an after-thought, contradicting the explanation just given. It may well be an interpolation.

143 This may also explain the claim to "omniscience" (sarvajñatva).

144 This is in agreement with CMN, translated above, in which the Convention-Seal was defined as "the flashing-forth of the form of Heruka".

145 Except when translating sahaja, I retain Snellgrove's precise and fluent translation. It should perhaps be pointed out that terms like sahaja, māhamudrā, tattva, mahāsukha, Hevajra, AHAM, etc., will in this connection be regarded as pointing to the same ultimate reality – without thereby ignoring the fact that their associations, even contexts, are different.

146 Perhaps "experienced directly" is the best rendering of svasamvedya.

147 Kumārīsuratam, Snellgrove's translation, "blissful like that of union with a maiden", misses the point.

148 See HVT Part I p.22–28.

149 All these concepts represent the highest metaphysical absolutes of various Indian philosophies.

150 "I", AHAM, consists of the syllables A, representing Nairatmya (HVT II.iv.41), and HAM, representing the Moon, Hevajra, etc. (I.i.31); hence AHAM is the totality, the plenitude of the Buddha-nature.

151 HVT Part I p.78 n.3, quoting a passage of the commentary of Saroruha.

152 Ibid., p.33 n.3.

153 As in the dvandva-compound svādhiṣṭhāna-prabhāsvara (M 5.4), svā° being the cakra situated at the base of the genital organs, cf. Eliade, Yoga, p.241.

154 For a detailed study of the luminosity of thought in non-tantric Buddhism, see part IV ("La luminosité naturelle de la pensée") of D. S. Ruegg, La théorie du tathāgatagarbha et du gotra, Publications de l'École Française d'Extrême-Orient vol.LXX,

Paris 1969, p.409–54. For a broader phenomenological study, see Eliade. The Two and the One, London 1965, p. 19–77.

155 Extrovertive mystical states dealt with p.62–81, summary p.79; introvertive p.81–111, summary p.110–11. General summary and conclusion p. 131–33. I slightly abridge the conclusions arrived at by Stace.

156 A great number of other sets of criteria have of course been proposed in this connection; the classical one is perhaps that of W. James, The Varieties of Religious Experience, New York (paperback ed.) 1961, p.299–301, viz. "ineffability", "noetic quality", "transiency", and "passivity". A discussion of these and other criteria would of course go far beyond the scope of the present study.

157 I take this expression from E. C. Dimock, Jr., The Place of the Hidden Moon, Chicago 1966, p.222, where it is used to refer to the Vaishnava sahajiyā ritual of union.

158 See his chapter on "Mysticism and Logic", p.251–76.

159 See the translation of the relevant passage in the preceding chap.

160 J. Findlay, "The Logic of Mysticism", Religious Studies, vol. II no. 2 (April 1976), p. 145–62.

161 See Stace p.278–80. However, his treatment of the subject is, in my opinion, inadequate. The examples which he quotes must by no means (as does Stace) be interpreted as "alleged scientific revelations". That the mystical experience involves some kind of "knowledge" may be shown to be the case in a great number of widely scattered instances. Here attention will only be drawn to the fact that "knowledge" is regarded as a part of satori in the case of several prominent Zen-masters; this is significant, as Zen is generally recognized as being particularly "anti-cognitative". Cf. H. Dumoulin, A History of Zen Buddhism, New York 1963, p. 252.

162 J. B. Pratt, The Religious Consciousness, New York 1920, p.408, quoting Herman Joseph.

163 Quoting Snellgrove, HVT Part I p.29.

164 R. K. Mukherjee, The Song of the Self Supreme, Delhi 1971.

165 N. Smart, "Interpretation and Mystical Experience", Religious Studies vol.I no. 1 (October 1965), p.75–87.

166 This unity is particularly stressed in PVS.

167 A. Bharati, The Tantric Tradition, has protested against the alleged monism implied by this interpretation which in substance agrees with that of H. P. Shastri (AVS, Preface, p.xiii). Bharati's protest is due to his insistence that tantric Buddhism is "non-ontological" (op.cit. p.27–28). However, I fail to see how such a position can be maintained.

168 Sāhaja is a derivative of sahaja. The use of sāhaja in the present context has the broader sense of "spontaneous".

169 Shastri's ed. has nijabedha° which cannot be correct.

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B. Texts and abbreviations

AVS	*Advayavajrasaṃgraha*, ed. H. P. Shastri, G. O. S. Vol. XL, Baroda 1927
BHSD	*F. Edgerton*, Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Dictionary, Delhi 1970
CG	*Caryāgītikoṣa*, text and translation in Kværne, An Anthology of Buddhist Tantric Songs, see above.
CMN	*Caturmudrāniścaya*, p. 32–35 of AVS
CMT	*Caṇḍamahāroṣaṇatantra*, A Critical Edition and English Translation of Chapters I–VIII, by C. S. George, American Oriental Series, Vol. 56, New Haven, Conn., 1974.
FBT	"Fundamentals of the Buddhist Tantras" (*rGyud-sde spyi'i rnam-par gžag-pa rgyas-par brǰod*, by *mKhas-grub rǰe*), ed. and transl. by F. D. Lessing and A. Wayman, Indo-Iranian Monographs, Vol. VIII, The Hague 1968.
HSP	*Hevajrasekaprakriyā*, ed. and transl. by L. Finot, "Manuscrits Sanskrits de Sādhana's retrouvés en Chine", Journal Asiatique vol. 225, Paris 1934 (July–September), p. 1–86. (Text p. 19–31, translation p. 31–48).
HVT	*Hevajratantra*, ed. and transl. by D. L. Snellgrove, see above.
IS	*Jñānasiddhi* by Indrabhūti, ed. B. Bhattacharyya, Two Vajrayāna Works, G. O. S. vol. XLIV, Baroda 1929, p. 31–97.
M	Munidatta's commentary to CG, ed. Kværne, see above.
ORC	Obscure Religious Cults, by Dasgupta, see above.
PK	*Pañcakrama* by Nāgārjuna, ed. L. de la Vallée Poussin, Gand 1896, (includes a short commentary by Parahitaraksita).
PVS	*Prajñopāyaviniścayasiddhi* by Anaṅgavajra, in: Two Vajrayāna Works, ed. B. Bhattacharyya, G. O. S. Vol. XLIV, Baroda 1929, p. 3–27. (First three chapters transl. by D. L. Snellgrove, Buddhist Texts Through the Ages, ed. E. Conze. Oxford 1954, p. 240–46).
SN	*Sekanirṇaya*, p. 28–31 of AVS.
SP	*Sārārthapañjikā*, commentary to Tillopāda's *Dohākoṣa*, ed. P. C. Bagchi, *Dohākoṣa. Apabhraṃśa Texts of the Sahajayāna School*, Calcutta Sanskrit Series, No. 25C, Calcutta 1938, p. 61–71.
ST	*Sekoddeśaṭīkā* by Nāṭapāda, ed. M. E. Carelli, G. O. S. Vol. XC, Baroda 1941. (Introduction and synopsis, p. 5–35).
YRM	*Yogaratnamātā* by Kāṇha, ed. D. L. Snellgrove, HVT Part II (see above), p.103–159.

79

THE STUDY OF BON IN THE WEST

Past, present, and future

Per Kvaerne

Source: *Bon Studies 2: New Horizons in Bon Studies*, Senri Ethnological Reports 15, Osaka: National Museum of Ethnology (2000): 7–20.

In the West, pre-Buddhist religious beliefs and practices in Tibet have generally been referred to by the Tibetan term *bon*. As Geoffrey Samuel has pointed out (1993: 320), "the special nature of Tibetan religion has often been explained in terms of the influence of Bon on Buddhism." At the same time, and in conformity with Tibetan usage, *bon* also refers to one of the organised, monastic religious schools of present-day Tibet, a school which manifestly has many points of similarity with Buddhism. Accordingly, among the most pertinent questions which the study of *bon* in the West has attempted to answer, are: What is the relationship, if any, between early, pre-Buddhist *bon* and the present, organised religious school likewise styled *bon*? What is the relationship between this religious school and Buddhism? What is the relationship between *bon* in either sense of the word and popular, non-monastic religion? The present paper will present an outline of various responses to these questions, and suggest areas which would seem to be in particular need of research in the years to come.

In 1993, Geoffrey Samuel published a short but useful survey of Western research concerning Bon (referred to above), and the following year I published a similar survey (Kvaerne 1994). Inevitably, I shall repeat much of what has already been said, although the present paper will bring these surveys up to date and also offer some additional remarks.

Although several scholars, above all, perhaps, the Indian pundit Sarat Chandra Das and the German missionary A. H. Francke had already written about the Bon religion, the first scholar who set himself the task of dealing with it in a comprehensive manner and on the basis of all the sources which were available at the time, was Helmut Hoffmann. His study, *Quellen zur Geschichte der tibetischen Bon-Religion* (Hoffmann 1950) was completed in manuscript as early as 1944, but was only published in 1950. It was based on ethnographic material provided by Western travellers in Tibet and adjacent regions, as well as on the few Bonpo texts available in Europe at the time; it also made use of a

selection of Tibetan Buddhist texts, mainly historical works, in which Bon is referred to.

Hoffmann's work remains an impressive and in a sense, fundamental study. However, it is based on a particular theory of the development of the Bon religion. Briefly, this theory had two components. The first component concerned the nature of the 'original' (i.e. pre-Buddhist) Bon religion. Hoffmann claimed that this religion was characterised by the total dependence of the Tibetans on the natural environment in which they lived. In order to cope with the fear and awe which this environment engendered in their minds, Tibetans worshipped nature spirits and made use of magic and divination. In a work published a few years later, he wrote: "... the Tibetans of those days were apparently completely subject to the powerful and formidable nature of their natural surroundings. Their completely nature-rooted and nature-dominated religious ideas revolved reverently and submissively around the powers and forces of their wild highland landscape whose divinities were reflected in the idea of numerous good and evil spirits the Tibetans thought to see all around them" (Hoffmann 1961: 17). In adopting this argument, Hoffmann only followed nature-romantic ideas which had been current in Europe since the early nineteenth century, but which by the 1950s were outdated both in anthropology and in the study of religion. However, in defining this early religion of Tibet, Hoffmann made use of two terms which were to prove to be tenacious in the study of Bon: *animism* and *shamanism*. Hoffmann maintained that it was possible to reconstruct, at least in part, this pre-Buddhist animistic-shamanistic religion by studying the modern popular religion and with the help of literary sources composed after the final triumph of Buddhism in the eleventh century. Further he maintained that "... we are in a position to say with some certainty that the original Bon religion was the national Tibetan form of that old animist-shamanist religion which at one time was widespread not only in Siberia but throughout the whole of Inner Asia, East and West Turkestan, Mongolia, Manchuria, the Tibetan plateaux and even China" (Hoffmann 1961: 14–15).

The second component in Hoffmann's theory was a certain periodization of the development of Bon. Although it is well known, it is necessary to briefly summarize it here. According to Hoffmann, the history of Bon can be divided into three periods. The first, the pre-Buddhist period, was that of the shamanistic-animistic religion outlined above, essentially identical with present-day folk religion in Tibet. The second period was characterized by the emergence of an organised priesthood and a developed doctrine under the influence of religions to the west of Tibet, a process in which, according to Hoffmann, Gnostic, Shaivite, and Buddhist Tantric elements all played a role. This was the religious establishment which confronted Buddhism when the latter was introduced into Tibet during the reign of the kings of the Yarlung dynasty. The third and final stage took place after the triumph of Buddhism. Adherents of Bon, now forced to retreat to outlying parts of the country, in order to ensure the survival of their religion copied essential elements of Buddhism, such as monastic life, religious texts, philosophy, liturgy, and iconography. Although Bon thus underwent a dramatic transformation, it retained,

so Hoffmann claimed, a basic characteristic, viz. an implacable hatred of the new, dominant Buddhist religion. This hatred was expressed in the reversal of Buddhist customs; thus, circumambulation of holy objects was performed in a counter-clockwise direction, prayer wheels were rotated in the same contrary fashion, and so on. Bon became a kind of *heresy*, and Hoffmann put much effort into presenting it as a distortion of Buddhism, characterised by perversion and negation, comparing it, in fact, with the supposed Satanic cults of mediaeval Europe. In *The Religions of Tibet*, Hoffmann goes to the extent of quoting a novel of Alexandra David-Neel, *Magie d'amour et magie noire, Scènes du Tibet inconnu* (Paris 1938) as if it were an ethnographic report: "... some Bon priests are supposed to lengthen their own earthly days by appropriating the life force of others who die a painful death by starvation. However, these victims must be voluntary, as otherwise the sacrifice is of no effect" (Hoffmann 1961: 107).

As is now well known, Hoffmann's account of the development of Bon in three historical stages, completely unknown in Bonpo sources, was based on a work written by the Tibetan Buddhist scholar belonging to the Gelugpa school, Thu'u-kwan Blo-bzang chos-kyi nyi-ma (1737–1802), completed in 1801. In this work, Chos-kyi nyi-ma discusses all the schools of Tibetan Buddhism, and also includes a short chapter on Bon. This chapter was translated into English by Sarat Chandra Das and published in 1881, only eighty years after it was written, and thus became the basis for Western conceptions of the history of Bon.

In 1988 Rolf A. Stein pointed out that this periodization, far from being invented by Chos-kyi nyi-ma, was adopted from a much older Buddhist source, viz. the *dGongs gcig yig cha*, a work dating from the early thirteenth century (Stein 1988: 31). Chos-kyi nyi-ma uses this periodization in a polemical context. In fact his attack on Bon is not so much due to ignorance and lack of sources, although that would certainly also seem to have been the case, as to the fact that, as pointed out by E. Gene Smith in 1969, he was "writing at a politically unfavourable time, a few decades after the Manchu campaign against the Bon-led rebellion in the state of Rab-brtan ... in the Rgyal-rong" (Smith 1969–1971 vol.1: 1). In other words, Chos-kyi nyi-ma was writing in a specific political situation which no doubt determined his account.

Before moving on to scholars who have been more directly influential for contemporary Bon studies, brief mention must be made of a scholar who shared some of Hoffmann's ideas concerning the syncretistic nature of Bon, viz. Matthias Hermanns. Hermanns, who had lived in Amdo in the 1940s, was convinced that Bon was heavily influenced by Iranian religion and by Manichaeism, and in his work (Hermanns 1965), he argued that the biography of sTon-pa gShen-rab as found in the *gZer mig* was entirely of Manichaean inspiration (Hermanns 1965: 130–131). While Hermanns' claims were certainly wildly extravagant, the whole question of Iranian influences on Tibetan culture in general, and on the Bon religion in particular, remains in my opinion open; one suspects that such influences have made themselves felt, but conclusive evidence is still lacking. (See Kvaerne 1987: 163–174).

Although Hoffmann subsequently modified his views, his basic assumption that pre-Buddhist Bon was "shamanistic" and "animistic" became extremely influential and has continued to be repeated by other, less critical authors. However, scholarship was soon to develop in new directions. Simplifying a complex process, it may be said that in the early 1960s two new factors became increasingly important: firstly, the presence of learned Bonpo monks in India and the West following the uprising in Tibet, and, secondly, the systematic study of Dunhuang documents (and royal edicts and other inscriptions from Tibet itself). Simplifying even further, one may say that the first factor dominated the study of Bon in England and the second in France.

In the 1950s and 60s, David L. Snellgrove had been one of the first Western scholars to make prolonged visits to Nepal, and he had travelled extensively in the northern parts of that country, where he came into contact with small but ancient Bonpo communities. Not only could he see for himself that the *ethos* of Bon was not one of perversion and negation (as Hoffmann had claimed), but he also discovered that the Bonpos possessed a vast and totally unexplored literature. Although this had been hinted at by earlier travellers to Tibet, such as J.F. Rock and George Roerich, no one had actually looked into this literature *in situ* before.

In 1960, Snellgrove met several learned Bonpo monks from Tibet. These monks had brought not only books, but also a vast treasure of traditional learning. Snellgrove was the first scholar in the West to seize the opportunity which these circumstances offered, and in 1961 he invited three of these monks to London where, for several years, he collaborated closely with them.

The first and most visible result of this collaboration was the publication in 1967 of *The Nine Ways of Bon* (London Oriental Series Vol. 18), which provided, for the first time in the West, a systematic presentation of the teachings of Bon in the form of the text and translation of excerpts from an important Bonpo canonical text. However, equally important was the manner in which the translation had been made: it was the result of line-by-line consultation with a Tibetan Bonpo scholar, the learned head teacher of sMan-ri monastery, Lopön Tenzin Namdak. For the first time, the understanding which the Bonpos themselves have of their religion and history was taken seriously, although it was by no means adopted in the new theory of the nature and history of Bon which Snellgrove proposed in the introduction to his book.

The most important aspect of this theory was that in spite of its polemical attitude towards Buddhism, post-eleventh century Bon was not a sinister perversion of Buddhism, but rather an eclectic tradition which, unlike Buddhism in Tibet, insisted on accentuating rather than denying its pre-Buddhist elements. Nevertheless, the real background of Bon was, Snellgrove stressed, mainly to be found in the Buddhist Mahayana tradition of Northern India, although in the case of Bon, this tradition could have reached Tibet by a different course than that which was followed by the particular Buddhist transmission which eventually came to prevail under the Tibetan term *chos*. Thus, independently of the official introduction of Buddhism into central Tibet in the seventh and eighth centuries under the

patronage of the Tibetan kings, Buddhism had also penetrated areas which today are in western Tibet but which at that time were part of the independent kingdom of Zhang-zhung. This form of Buddhism, essentially of a tantric type, adopted the name of *bon* and came to be regarded as the native religion of that kingdom. Thereafter Bon was propagated in central Tibet, where it inevitably came into conflict with *chos*. In the course of time, Bon, itself in reality a form of Buddhism, interacted with the other Buddhist traditions in Tibet, in particular with the Nyingmapa tradition, up to the present day. This historical model was restated in several publications (Snellgrove and Richardson 1968, Snellgrove 1987).

Snellgrove's work, not only with regard to substance, but also with regard to method, has been extremely influential, indeed crucial for subsequent studies. However, his interest was mainly focussed on the organised religious school which, starting in the tenth and eleventh centuries, can be traced continuously up to its present-day adherents in Tibet, Nepal, and in exile. He regarded this religion as fundamentally a form of Buddhism, as heterodox and eclectic rather than "heretical". He had less to say concerning Bon as a non-Buddhist or even pre-Buddhist religion existing in Tibet (as distinct from Zhang-zhung) before the introduction of Buddhism from India under the patronage of the Yarlung dynasty. This aspect of Bon was, however, the special field of the French Tibetologists from the 1960s onwards.

The course of the French school of Bonpo studies had been set as early as 1952 with Marcelle Lalou. Starting with Lalou, the French scholars have completely dominated the study of the extremely problematic Tibetan material from Dunhuang, the only material which, together with a small number of inscriptions in Tibet itself, actually physically dates from the Yarlung period. Lalou's interest in Bon was, however, limited, and in her book (Lalou 1957), one finds the often-quoted statement that "S'il me fallait définir en deux mots ce qui me semble le plus caractéristique du milieu Bon, je dirais: le sang et le poison" (Lalou 1957: 12) ("If I had to define in two words what seems to me most characteristic of the Bon milieu, I would say: blood and poison"). Bon is depicted as a ritualistic religion obsessed with bloody sacrificial rites and with administering poison to enemies. However, she also revealed a nature-mythological turn of mind when she mused, in terms similar to Hoffmann's, that, "Nor is it impossible that some of the events recounted are renderings by means of imagery of the impressive and dangerous phenomena of the Tibetan climate, and that they for the most part are simply inspired by the characteristics of the seasons that regulate the life of the pastoralists" (Lalou 1957: 10).

Needless to say, an excellent scholar like Lalou was perfectly aware that there was more to it than that; however, it was Rolf A. Stein who significantly developed the study of Bon in France. Stein's research in this respect has primarily focused on myths and rituals, and his material has been partly documents from Dunhuang, partly the ritual compendium *Klu 'bum* which undoubtedly contains much ancient material, and partly but to a lesser extent more recent texts.

In his book *La civilisation tibétaine* (Stein 1962), Stein introduced a major

conceptual innovation by distinguishing between popular religion, which he regarded as essentially non-Buddhist, on the one hand, and the Bon religion, not only in its contemporary, organised form, but also in its dynastic, pre-Buddhist form, on the other. In his book, popular religion was styled "the nameless religion" and dealt with in a separate chapter; it was allotted, somehow, a timeless existence as the authentic, autochthonous religious system of the Tibetan people. He regarded Bon, on the contrary, as a specific religious tradition, containing many non-Tibetan religious elements, primarily from India, which had been formed in Tibet in a certain historical period, perhaps simultaneously with the rise of the Yarlung dynasty.

Stein's preference has been for textual and historical specificity, as is consistently reflected in his immense and uniquely learned work. This has in fact all along been the hallmark of French Tibetology. Not long after the publication of Stein's book, an original and, as it turned out, controversial, study was published by another French Tibetologist. In a monumental article entitled, somewhat dauntingly, "Une lecture des Pelliot Tibétain 1286, 1287, 1038, et 1290. Essai sur la formation et l'emploi des mythes politiques dans la religion royale de Srong-bcan sgam-po" ("A reading of PT 1286 etc. An essay on the formation and the use of political myths in the royal religion of Srong-bcan sgam-po") (Macdonald 1971), Ariane Macdonald argued, on the basis of an analysis of certain Dunhuang manuscripts, that until the ascendancy of Buddhism, the official religion in Tibet during the Yarlung dynasty was not Bon at all, but a specific cult of the king regarded as a divine being. This cult was known as *gtsug* or *gtsug lag*. The complete triumph of Buddhism explains, so Macdonald maintained, the total silence of later sources with regard to *gtsug*.

Perhaps because of its somewhat inaccessible mode of presentation, Macdonald's article never inspired the broad debate one might have expected. It was only in 1985 that the salient points of her theory were discussed and refuted at length by R.A. Stein (1985: 83–133). However, both scholars would probably have agreed that "the religion of the early Tibetan royal court in the sixth to eighth centuries was an entirely different affair from the Bon religion as it exists today. Neither should be identified with any original Tibetan pre-Buddhist religion" (Samuel 1993: 320), although Stein subsequently documented concrete instances of loans (significantly using the word "emprunts") in the later "organized" Bon from Dunhuang documents (Stein 1988: 55).

The Western scholars discussed so far have had, in spite of their erudition, a tendency to ignore, or at least to not take seriously, the understanding of Bon actually found among adherents of the Bon religion itself. The basic postulate of these scholars was, as we have seen, that there is no direct continuity between the pre-Buddhist faith and the later Bon religion, and that the latter is, essentially, a form of Buddhism (no matter how heterodox or eclectic). Both postulates are firmly denied by contemporary Bonpos as well as by their entire literary tradition. However, a deeper appreciation of the beliefs and world-view of the many Bonpo monks and laymen in exile as well as in Tibet who over

many years have so patiently and generously shared their time and knowledge with inquisitive scholars from the West, has gradually led to a shift of emphasis not only in my own case, but, I think, also in the case of other scholars. Some, including myself, would now maintain that it is perfectly legitimate, indeed necessary, to view Bon as a distinct religion, in the same way, perhaps, that the Sikh religion is distinct from Hinduism or the Druse faith is distinct from Islam. This reassessment of Bon stresses aspects such as historical tradition and sources of authority and legitimation rather than doctrine, philosophy, and external practices and monastic institutions.

Looking back, I think that an important factor in this gradual shift in perspective was the publication in 1972 of Samten G. Karmay's translation of a part of the history of Bon by the Tibetan Bonpo scholar Shar-rdza bKra-shis rgyal-mtshan (1859–1935). Although written in the 1920s, this text presents, with abundant quotations from older sources, the traditional Bonpo view of history. Karmay is by no means uncritical of this version of history – he suggests, for example, that with regard to the Bonpo tradition of two persecutions of Bon "the possibility that later Bon-po historians have made two persecutions out of what was in fact only one" (Karmay 1972: xxxiii). Nevertheless, Shar-rdza's work is an impressive and consistent statement of a coherent historical perspective which it seems impossible to ignore. I shall return to this below.

Our discussion has now brought us to the present time which is, of course, nothing but a transition to the future. I shall therefore say something about the present situation while at the same time suggesting certain future tasks and challenges. I must, however, emphasize that there can be no question of making anything even approaching a complete survey of all the ongoing research regarding Bon.

In a sense, the crucial question regarding the development of Bon is the context and nature of the religious beliefs and practices prevalent in Tibet at the time of the rise of the Yarlung dynasty and up to the final triumph of Buddhism. Without a clearer idea of the religion of this period, its relationship with later developments must necessarily remain obscure. On the assumption that we can reconstruct the pre-Buddhist religion neither on the basis of popular religion as recorded in recent centuries nor on post-tenth century literary sources, we are left with sources which are more or less contemporary with the Yarlung dynasty, i.e. the Dunhuang manuscripts and a limited body of epigraphic material. Unfortunately it does not seem that younger scholars take much interest in continuing research in these crucially important but extremely difficult texts. Nevertheless, I would emphasize that an adequate and coherent description of the religion of this period is the single most important task in the study of Bon. Perhaps one can hope that archaeological excavations, which have begun to be undertaken on a small scale in Tibet in recent years, may bring new material to light and maybe even open up new perspectives.

While the study of the earliest sources with regard to non-Buddhist religion seems to have entered a period of hibernation, there is considerable activity

focused on the subsequent period, i.e. the period of the second propagation of Buddhism in Tibet starting in the eleventh century. As far as Bon is concerned, this period is characterised by the emergence and consolidation of religious beliefs and practices, known as Bon, within certain family lineages and expressed in a growing body of texts. Of particular significance is the research directed towards historiographical and biographical texts from this period. Probably the most important contribution has been made by Anne-Marie Blondeau in the form of an article published in 1990 in which she analyses the contents of the earliest available historical texts in Bon and argues convincingly that the oldest among them probably dates from the twelfth century (Blondeau 1990: 37–54). Blondeau has continued research into these early texts, and also compared them with certain early Buddhist sources, especially the *sBa bzhad*.

The earliest of these texts, the *Grags pa gling grags*, on which all subsequent Bonpo historical texts seem to rely, is of extreme rarity. Until very recently only two manuscripts were known, one preserved in the University Library of Oslo, the other in the Bonpo monastery in India. A third manuscript, which is of particular interest as it is somewhat longer and more detailed than the other two, has now surfaced in Tibet. I have prepared a complete translation of this text, which I plan to publish as soon as possible. Taking this text as a point of departure, I hope other scholars will study and perhaps translate other Bonpo historical texts so that eventually a more complete understanding of the alternative view of Tibetan history as formulated by the Bon tradition may emerge.

In my article (Kvaerne 1994: 139), I wrote that "A title-list, and eventually a proper catalogue of the texts in the Bonpo Kanjur is a research project which should be given high priority". In the academic year 1995–96 I had the good fortune, thanks to a generous grant from the Centre for Advanced Study at the Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters, to carry out this project. I was able to invite a group of seven scholars, including four Tibetans, to Oslo. In the course of a year we compiled a detailed catalogue of the more than 190 volumes of the Bonpo Kanjur. Within a year or two, this catalogue should be ready for publication and will, hopefully, be of use in the exploration of this vast literary corpus.

With regard to Bonpo literature, a major issue has been the question of its origins. To Hoffmann, it seemed highly probable that "there is some justification of the Buddhist charges of plagiarism" (Hoffmann 1961: 108). Even Snellgrove, in his introduction to *The Nine Ways of Bon* (Snellgrove 1967), stated that "Much of this literature, e.g. some of their *sūtras* and especially the 'Perfection of Wisdom' teachings, has been copied quite shamelessly from the Buddhists", but he did add that "by far the greater part would seem to have been absorbed through learning and then retold, and this is not just plagiarism".

Real progress in this controversial issue was, however, only made by Blondeau in her study "Le Lha 'dre bka' thaṅ" (Blondeau 1971). In this article, the importance of which can hardly be overrated, she established a close textual correspondence between the Buddhist account, dating from the second half of the fourteenth century, of the epic journey of Padmasambhava to Tibet and a

similar narrative in the Bonpo text *gZer mig*, the two-volume ("medium-length") version of the biography of sTon-pa gShen-rab, of the journey of the latter from 'Ol-mo lung-ring to rKong-po in pursuit of the demon Khyab-pa lag-ring who had stolen his horses. Blondeau arrived at the surprising conclusion (surprising, that is, to Western scholars, but not, of course, to Bonpos) that it was not the Bonpo text which was a copy of the Buddhist original, but the other way round. Subsequently Samten G. Karmay has arrived at similar conclusions with regard to certain *rdzogs chen* texts (Karmay 1988: 216–223). This kind of comparative study should be continued, for it is the only way by which one may hope to define the origin and nature of Bonpo literature.

A closely related field of enquiry is that of the affiliation of ideas, though not necessarily of actual textual passages. Among the most significant contributions of this kind are several studies by Katsumi Mimaki based on the fourteenth century Bonpo doxographical text, the *Bon sgo gsal byed*. For example, Mimaki has compared the thirty-two marks of Buddha Śākyamuni with the list of the thirty-two marks of sTon-pa gShen-rab found in that text (paper presented at the 1998 IATS seminar), and the structures of various classifications of schools and doctrines according to Buddhist and Bonpo sources (Mimaki 1994: 117–136).

In my 1994 survey of research, I pointed out that "In addition to the study of literary sources, a complex iconographical tradition also awaits study" (Kvaerne 1994: 139). Hopefully, this situation has to some extent been remedied through the publication in 1995 of my book on the iconography of Bon (Kvaerne 1995). If nothing else, the book shows that the Bon religion has been capable of producing sculpture and painting which is of the highest standard and should thus, once and for all, lay to rest the notion, still entertained by some, that there is something 'primitive' about Bon.

In the same article, I expressed the hope that the immense ritual legacy of Bon would be studied while there are still senior Bonpo lamas alive who can pass on their vast store of knowledge. In fact, in the 1980s a fair number of articles and studies of Bonpo rituals were published (listed in Kvaerne 1994: 138 n.5), but in recent years this trend seems to have stagnated, with the notable exception of the remarkable book by Namkhai Norbu (1995).

Being written by a noted Tibetan *rdzogs chen* master, this book in a certain sense falls outside the scope of my paper. However, as it has been translated into English and published for a Western audience and has a preface written by an Italian scholar, Adriano Clemente, it should be briefly referred to. Namkhai Norbu's basic idea is that what he calls "the ancient Bön tradition" (Namkhai Norbu 1995: xviii) was "the original wisdom of the Tibetans" (1995: xviii). This wisdom was characterized by "a practical and concrete knowledge of the various aspects of the energy of the individual in relation to the dimension in which he lives" (1995: xviii). However, these ideas, which for Namkhai Norbu represent the "genuine roots" of Tibetan culture, "undoubtedly derive from the ancient Bön tradition and civilisation of Shang Shung" (1995: xix). In other words, there is no difference between the pre-Buddhist religion of Tibet and the Bön religion

associated with Zhang-zhung: "... the culture of the kingdom (*i.e. Yarlung*) was that of Shang Shung, as was its religion" (1995: xvi). The later Bon tradition, i.e. the tradition which still exists in Tibet as an organised religion, and which Namkhai Norbu calls "official Bön", was, however, influenced by Buddhism to the extent that "the importance of the original traditions was neglected in favour of the philosophical teachings derived from Buddhism ... and the authentic principles of the ancient Bön culture were misconstrued and almost excised by the protagonists of official Bön" (1995: xviii). Although he regards Bon, as did Hoffmann, as "very probably based on elements common to the heritage of panasiatic Shamanism" (1995: xv), he considers, as opposed to Hoffmann, shamanism to be anything but primitive. As Clemente says in his Preface, "Understanding in our own time the value and significance of these rites means opening a door onto the immense panorama of the primordial experiences and knowledge of man" (1995: xiii).

In summing up, we return to the question of periodization of Bon. Geoffrey Samuel has proposed a model for the historical development of early Tibetan religion on the basis of an analysis of successive stages in the history of early Tibetan society (Samuel 1993: 436 ff.). The first period (before the seventh century) is designated "the original shamanic religion of the Tibetans" (Samuel 1993: 438), subdivided into two periods, that of a stateless society and that of proto-states. Samuel of course uses the word "shaman" in a different sense from Hoffmann. This is followed by a "court religion" connected with the rise of the Yarlung dynasty, characterised by the activities of *bon* and *gshen* priests, influenced not only by the "shamanic religion" but also by an earlier "court religion" of Zhang-zhung. Samuel emphasises that "The *bön* priests who formed part of the court religion at Lhasa were only one of a number of kinds of priests at this time." Contemporary Bon is regarded as "a Buddhist or quasi-Buddhist order," although "it seems likely that the modern Bön religion has preserved a significant amount of early material" (1993: 438).

This historical model is probably the most sophisticated one to be suggested to date, and taken as an analytical tool it can be extremely useful. In the absence of historical sources, some of its stages must, however, remain hypothetical. Personally I would suggest a simpler and in a sense more conservative model employing only four categories: (1) an autochthonous, "pre-Buddhist" Tibetan religion (which may or may not have been styled *bon* at the time), corresponding to Samuel's "original shamanic religion of the Tibetans", and (2) an organised cult, perhaps focusing on the person of the king, influenced by religions in neighbouring cultures such as India (including, perhaps, Buddhism), or even Iran, established in Zhang-zhung as well as in Tibet, and which again may or may not have been called *bon*. This would correspond to the "court religion" both of Zhang-zhung and of Tibet. However, I would emphasize that even the distinction between the two categories mentioned so far is made for analytical purposes only, and that the sources do not allow us to define the extent to which we may in fact be dealing with different entities, the main problem here being

that an "original shamanic religion of the Tibetans" has to be reconstructed entirely *a posteriori*. Further, we may, with Stein and Tucci, distinguish (3) a contemporary "folk religion" or a "religion without name" which has often been styled Bon in Western literature but is never thus referred to in Tibetan. While we cannot reconstruct an ancient "pre-Buddhist" religion on the basis of this contemporary "nameless" folk religion, we should not on the other hand dismiss all links between present-day popular religion and pre-Buddhist beliefs and practices. On the contrary, we find significant areas of continuity, particularly represented by the cult of ancestral, hence sacred mountains or deities identified with such mountains, or dwelling on such mountains, which is well attested from the period of the Yarlung dynasty, as well as in present-day popular religion, as has been documented in several important studies by Samten Gyaltsen Karmay (1996: 59–75). Finally, (4) the post-eleventh century, organised and eventually monastic Bon religion, styling itself *g-yung drung bon*, "Immutable Bon", which has been the main focus of research in the years following Snellgrove's first contact with its adherents around 1960, still needs to be defined in relationship not only to Buddhism, but to the other three analytical categories outlined above. In spite of its obvious links with Buddhism, I would prefer to regard it as a separate religion, for reasons given above.

Before closing, I cannot refrain from expressing mild despair at the tenacity of certain notions regarding Bon, which may still be found in the writings of otherwise excellent and well-established scholars, particularly in works intended for the general public. Thus a recent German guide book to Tibet writes of pre-Buddhist Bon as "a religion which presumably was originally strongly marked by animistic and nature-religious characteristics" (Everding 1993: 75). The author continues: "The priests, the *Bönpos*, worshipped the stars of heaven, they attempted to influence fate by means of sacrifices of animals and in certain circumstances even of humans; they practised all kinds of magic in order to exorcise evil spirits and to pacify malevolent demons". "With the arrival of Buddhism, the Bon religion ... developed a systematic doctrine, adopted Manichaean and Persian religious elements, and in the course of time its teachings gradually moved closer and closer to those of Buddhist philosophy" (1993: 76).

One of the most widely used guide books, viz. Stephen Batchelor (1987) refers to "the native Bön religion, an animistic cult governed by exorcists, shamans and priests" (Batchelor 1987: 15) and to "the primitive and less universal beliefs of Bön" (1987: 19), and Gyurme Dorje adopts the tripartite periodization of Bon of Chos-kyi nyi-ma as if it were an established fact (Gyurme Dorje 1996: 69–70).

In 1948, the Italian photographer Fosco Maraini accompanied Giuseppe Tucci on his last expedition to Tibet. In the Tromo valley, upon encountering Bonpo monks from the local Bonpo monastery, he styled them "the Etruscans of Asia", thus eloquently expressing the aura of mystery which at the time surrounded Bon (Maraini 1952: 113). Today, the Bonpos are no longer the Etruscans of Asia. But as the contours of its history slowly emerge, Bon becomes in turn the basis of new myth-making. Projections of Western fantasies regarding Tibet multiply also

with regard to Bon. In particular, it is now fashionable in certain circles to link Bon with shamanism; not with the northern Asian shamanistic complex, as Hoffmann imagined, but with Native American shamanism, a potent symbolical term in the New Age movement. As encounters between Bon and the West multiply, so also do misrepresentations. Bon, surrounded by an aura of mystification in which terms such as "Zhang-zhung" and "Tönpa Shenrap" abound, has become a commodity in the global supermarket of religions. Bon has become an object of New Age economic and ideological exploitation, in which the Tibetans, ultimately, are the losers. To reinsert Bon into its real historical and cultural context is therefore not only a meaningful academic pursuit, but is also a way for us, as scholars, to practise solidarity with the Tibetan people.

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A MODERN NEWAR GUIDE FOR VAJRAYĀNA LIFE-CYCLE RITES

The *Nepāl Jana Jīvan Kriyā Paddhati*

Todd T. Lewis

Source: *Indo-Iranian Journal* 37 (1994): 1–46.

I. Introduction: Newar Buddhist ritualism

Sugat Saurabh, modern Nepal's greatest epic poem in the Newari language, is an account of Śākyamuni Buddha's life by Chittadhar Hṛdaya (1901–1982), a Newar lay Buddhist of Kathmandu's Urāya caste. Hṛdaya's hagiography (Hridaya 1948) draws upon Sanskrit and Newari literary traditions which portray the Buddha in his early life and in previous births as a high caste householder who participates in the ritual customs appropriate to his status (Lewis 1989c). For Newar Buddhists in similar stations, it is natural that such *saṃskāras* (rites of passage) are integral to their lives as well.

This study examines the role of ritual in the Mahāyāna Buddhist community of Nepal and presents a translation of a modern ritual guidebook, *Nepāl Jana Jīvan Kriyā Paddhati*, that outlines Vajrayāna Buddhist life-cycle rites.[1] The Newar tradition represents a unique yet continuing survival of later Indian Mahāyāna-Vajrayāna Buddhism (Lienhard 1984), and this article is intended to add to the documentation and description necessary for an emerging and important field within Buddhist studies (Gellner 1986, 1987, 1988, 1992).

The abundance of cultural vitality evident in the later Malla era (1482–1768) that created the magnificent art and architecture in the Kathmandu Valley (Pal 1974; Slusser 1982) and established vast libraries of Buddhist Sanskrit manuscripts (Hodgson 1874; Burnouf 1844) was applied to other cultural domains as well. Hindu and Buddhist Newars – kings, priests, merchants, commoners – maintained an almost continuous yearly round of festival observances for their society. Likewise, their priests arranged complex rites to mark all significant events in an individual's lifetime. From conception to long after death, in celebration and in mourning, rituals have long been integral to the Newar lifestyle.

The elaboration of Buddhist ceremonies in this community is truly immense:

a recent handbook on rituals lists over 125 "major" *pūjās* (Vajrācārya 1981). The vast orchestration of such performances shows the extent to which Buddhists in the Kathmandu Valley adopted and maintained traditions from earlier Indian civilization. Nowhere else in the Himalayas has so much of earlier Indian Buddhist culture survived intact.

In this large Newar ritual heritage, there are patterns of regularity: most life cycle and other rituals can be broken into core "units" that tend to be assembled in consistent structural patterns (Lewis 1984: 192–198; 210–227). Still, the cumulative ritual tradition is so vast that even the best of priests must refer to ritual texts to do all but the most common *pūjās*.

Ritualism in the Newar context must be understood in relation to Buddhist history. The growth of popular devotion to celestial Bodhisattvas such as Avalokiteśvara and Tārā also fostered the ritual accentuation of later Buddhism. Mahāyāna *bhakti* directed Buddhist laymen to take refuge in these divinities that occupied a similar, competing niche alongside the great *devas* of the Indian pantheon. Popular texts recount these Bodhisattvas' rescuing devotees, bestowing boons, and controlling nature.[2] The establishment of Buddhist temples to these saviors created the need for an attending priesthood and the development of proper ritual procedures. For this reason, the great texts of the later tradition, e.g. the *Saddharma Puṇḍarīka* and *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, all contain chapters concerned with Buddhist *pūjā* and its rewards.[3] A host of ritual guidebooks were also composed in this later Buddhist era.[4]

The Vajrayāna Buddhist tradition that grew in importance from the fifth century CE onward in India furthered these ritualistic tendencies (Snellgrove 1987: 456), representing both a critique and a fulfillment of early Mahāyāna philosophy and praxis. The chief tantra-path exponents and exemplars, the *siddhas*, developed *sādhana* traditions outside of the scholarly monastic circles and rejected the prevalent multi-lifetime, slow approximation Bodhisattva approach to enlightenment. These yogins introduced the means to visualize and control *śūnyatā* directed by associating with the Buddha's three "secrets": Body (*mudrā*), Speech (*mantra*) and Mind (*samādhi*) (Wayman 1971: 443). Through a host of innovative techniques, the Vajrayāna masters showed the immediate possibility of harnessing the experience of *śūnyatā* to attain enlightenment.

As a corollary to their soteriological discoveries, the *siddhas* also composed rituals that applied a master's power to accomplish more mundane goals. The later scholars who eventually organized and domesticated the *sādhana* practices fashioned a Mahāyāna-Vajrayāna Buddhist culture that emphasized *pūjā* (ritual performance), *vrata* (devotional rites to a chosen deity (Lewis 1989), and *abhiṣeka* (esoteric initiation). Ritual descriptions constitute an important part of most tantric texts (Snellgrove 1987: 456); pilgrimage – a form of ritual – was also emphasized in the religious lifestyle (Bharati 1965).

This shift in religious emphases was also accompanied by adaptations within the *saṃghas*. Mahāyāna monks who adopted the Bodhisattva ethos viewed

serving the lay community as their chief duty, and ritual was a principal medium. As Robert Miller has noted,

> This responsibility may be thought of as community service. Thus, the ... monk ... rejects complete release from the cycle of existence, choosing instead to return again and again in the world in order to aid others in attaining release. This new duty is added to the old one of achieving personal enlightenment through the performance of the regular prayers and observances ... Since the layman is unable to pursue enlightenment directly, the saṃgha ... is obliged to find a means by which he can pursue it indirectly (1961: 430).

Thus, by establishing many levels of legitimate religious practice for laymen and many areas in which the *saṃgha* served society, the later Buddhist tradition engaged the entire spectrum of society. Farmers, traders, and artisans had a place in the spiritual hierarchy, as ritual offerings linked householders to temple-dwelling celestial Bodhisattvas as well as to their hierophants and teachers in the *saṃgha*. By the Pāla period in northeast India (c. 750–950), this sort of Mahāyāna-Vajrayāna culture was predominant (Dutt 1962: 389).

Judging by the central Sanskrit texts and rituals still resorted to by Newar *vajrācāryas*, it is clear that this stage of development was reached at roughly the same time in the Kathmandu Valley.[5] With the eventual widespread assimilation of Mahāyāna-Vajrayāna culture among Nepalese Buddhists by 1200 CE,[6] the dominant tradition seems to have reached a plateau in its evolution and identity. The Newars, like Buddhists across Asia, seem to have closed the door on core formulations of doctrine; perhaps influenced by teachings of the Dharma's decline (Williams 1989: 10), new emphasis and high priority shifted toward "preserving Buddha tradition." I surmise that certainly by 1200 later generations of devotees regarded the basic religious questions as solved: the Bodhisattva ideal became the predominant religious standard and the philosophical understanding of the universe – for those concerned with intellectual subtleties – was rooted in Nāgārjuna's Mādhyamika dialectic or Yogācāra idealism (Willis 1979; Mus 1964). Householders inclined to more immediate accomplishments could proceed upon a multitude of *vajrayāna* paths that held the promise of attaining quick spiritual progress toward enlightenment.

For the Newar *saṃgha*, the major areas of religious focus were preservation and manuscript copying and Nepal's *vihāras* to this day preserve a massive corpus of Sanskrit Buddhist texts. Ritual priests in medieval Nepal also devoted themselves to adapting Mahāyāna-Vajrayāna religious understandings in ritual terms. We have already noted how this was done in a most thoroughgoing manner for their society. For Newar *upāsakas* (devout laymen), their expression of distinct Buddhist identity became adherence to this ritually-centered lifestyle, devotion to Mahāyāna saviour deities, faith in the *siddhas* and *yoginīs* who discovered the highest path.

This pattern of development and help explains why Newar Buddhist tradition seems to lack a strong philosophical/scholastic dimension. What *is* carefully elaborated is the ritualism that expresses and interjects the Mahāyāna-Vajrayāna world view into every conceivable juncture: for relating to deities, celebrating festivals, moving an individual through his lifetime, and seeking *nirvāṇa*. Lacking in philosophical inquiry, the "genius" of Newar Buddhism lies in its pervasive orchestration of Vajrayāna rituals and teachings which channel blessings, well-being, and – for those householders willing to practice – movement toward enlightenment.[7] In this respect, Newar Buddhism carries on the evolutionary patterns and lay ethos of later Indian Buddhism[8] and should be considered the most important surviving outpost of this tradition (Lienhard 1984).

Newar Buddhism suffered a serious decline with the conquest of the Valley in 1769 by Parbatiyā *kṣatriyas* from Gorkha and the massive transitions its society has undergone. From a polity of isolated medieval city-states, the Kathmandu Valley has become the capital region of the modern Nepalese nation. Far-reaching changes in many spheres have accelerated, with the medieval Newar preoccupation with celebrating the rich and elaborate cumulative religious traditions the cultural domain that has suffered the most precipitous decline. Today there is no widespread doctrinal understanding of the most common rituals still performed. Few *vajrācāryas* grasp even the most basic underlying philosophic assumptions or relate to the rituals beyond the procedural level of proper order and *mantra* recitations (Lewis 1984: 569–573). Nonetheless, many of these traditions are so deeply embedded in Newar life that they continue to survive.[9] Even though many observances have been lost in the last century, the vast cumulative tradition of Mahāyāna-Vajrayāna ritual remains one of the most distinctive characteristics of Newar culture.

II. Newar Buddhist life cycle rites: features of 'applied Vajrayāna Buddhism'

From the first passages of this text, the application of core Vajrayāna concepts is apparent. Conception is described in terms of tantric physiology and the priest's *sādhana* is often cited as the basis for the rituals performed. The *vajrācāryas*' generation of *amṛta prasād* ("ambrosia") through their *pūjās* became integral to a medical-religious system that linked priests to laymen (Stablein 1978). This is all very orthodox from the standpoint of the later Buddhist textual traditions. But the Buddhist Newars have also combined many non-Buddhist strands of Indian culture with their own for the last fifteen centuries so that their observances evidence both continuities and divergences from the classic Mahāyāna-Vajrayāna ideals.

Concerning the Newar *vajrayāna* rites, a historical perspective is again the necessary starting point for grasping the evolution of Newar practice. From the earliest times onward, the *saṃgha* in India was instructed to adapt the tradition to the exigencies of the locality. This could entail reinterpreting certain *Vinaya* rules, accommodating local cultic practices (with certain changes), and making

social accommodations (Dutt 1962: 25ff). Lacking a centralized pan-regional bureaucracy or a universally accepted center of doctrinal authority (Lamotte 1984), the Buddhist *saṃgha* eventually became dependent upon the power of their polity's royalty to insure its orthopraxy/doxy (Tambiah 1976: 32–72; 159–164).[9] In North Indian history until 1200, as in later Nepalese history under Malla and Śāh rule, the socio-cultural context of Buddhism was also one of increasing Brahmanical dominance in the cultural environment (and especially true in the legal domain).

The Newar Buddhist *saṃskāras* outlined in the *Jana Jīvan* manual closely follow the classical paradigms of Indian Brahmanical tradition (Pandey 1969), marking the key points in a person's life with *vajrayāna* rituals that remove forces that threaten his passage, empower him, while eliminating any incurred pollution. These Buddhist *pūjās* follow many ancient Brahmanical ritual procedures, but have been transformed with alternative Buddhist gestures (*mudrās*), incantations (*mantras*, *dhāraṇīs*) and meanings. In general, Neward Buddhist ritualists adopted many core components of Brahmanical ritualism (caste perceptions, rite organization, mantra belief, purity concerns) but maintained separate boundaries through transpositions of ritual implements, priestly vestments, *mantra* formuli, *mudrās*, theories of ritual empowerment. The remaining task in this section is to underline some key points in the *Jana Jīvan* text that reflect the main outlines of this Newar Buddhist adaptation.

Caste

Particularly striking is the acceptance of caste categories in ritual reckoning. The text states that birth into a Śākya caste family is a necessary prerequisite for entry into the Newar *saṃgha*. Because Buddhism existed for at least 1700 years in India, this attention to caste should not be surprising.[11] Nonetheless, the Newars' use of strict endogamous lineages to define *saṃgha* membership is a unique and heterodox feature of the modern tradition.

It is also noteworthy that the *vajrācāryas* recognize Hindu deities and perform *pūjās* to them. But this is classical cosmological orthodoxy: Newar Buddhists regard all Indic and indigenous deities as subservient to the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. Ancient doctrinal and iconographic traditions that depict this image of Buddhist spiritual conquest are still maintained in the Kathmandu Valley. By extending their rituals to the "Hindu" deities, Newar Buddhists are not practicing "syncretism" but making the classical statement of Buddhism's superior spiritual status, especially by asserting these divinities' conversion by their tradition's divinities.[12]

Disease and karma

The passages dealing with karma indicate that Newar Buddhism adheres to orthodox doctrines expressed in the earliest texts. Karma is regarded as the

supreme causal power in the cosmos, but it is not the only cause. Still, it does contain birth status and, accordingly, caste. Because normal human beings cannot discern the exact state of anyone's karma, the *Jana Jīvan* text recommends that at times of illness, the protocol of treatment should include medicines, other practical remedies, and rituals.

Death rituals

It is important to note that approximately *one half* of this guidebook is devoted to the rituals associated with death. All *vajrayāna* ritual activity seeks to avert bad destiny and make *puṇya* to insure a good future for the sponsor(s), but the rituals surrounding death are the most prominent.

In prescribing year-long *śrāddha* offerings to the departed person for the first year after death, the Newar tradition is different from Tibetan and East Asian Buddhist practice, where 49 days is usually recognized as the limit of possible linkage and thereby effective ritual action. (Subsequent yearly rites on the death anniversary are consistent across the entire Buddhist world.) This seems highly unorthodox: despite espousing the doctrine of karma and rebirth, Newar *vajrācāryas* simultaneously maintain the necessity of these monthly *śrāddha* rituals throughout the first year. Even more Brahmanically, our text gives repeated assurances that the departed will reach *pitṛloka* if all of the rituals are done well and the requisite offerings are made by a suitable priest; but it does not specify how this cosmology meshes with alternative Buddhist textual notions.[13]

In pursuit of this Brahmanical desideratum, Newars spend vast time and resources on their *śrāddha* rituals. Thus, this Buddhist tradition plays to both sides of the Indian question of whether one's destiny is based strictly upon the individual's own karma from past and present lifetimes, or whether rituals can overrule this and manipulate rebirth destiny (Edgerton 1927).[14] Like most Indic religious systems founded on the doctrine that the cosmos is governed by karmic law, Newar tradition naturally looks to death as the critical time when causal mechanisms operate. It is not surprising that the very highly ritualized Buddhism of the Newars' has applied *vajrayāna* ritual expertise to this time as well.

This may well represent the Newar *saṃgha*'s economic adaptation in parallel with the patterns of Newar Brāhman ritualists who subsist mainly through death time gift-giving. It is important to note that *śrāddha* rituals are one of the chief occasions for laymen presenting *dāna* to the *vajrācārya saṃgha* (Lewis 1984: 325–6). So proficient were they in these rituals that until recent times even otherwise Hindu high caste Newar laymen regularly called *vajrācāryas* to perform their death rites. Dependence on after-death ritual service for income also shows the Newar form of Mahāyāna-Vajrayāna Buddhism similar to modern Japanese traditions, where such rituals are the predominant area where Buddhist tradition endures (Kitagawa 1966: 296).

Hierarchy in the Newar Buddhist saṃgha

The text provides important new information on the Newar *saṃgha*'s conceptions of itself. As much has been written on this complex community already (Locke 1975, 1985; Gellner 1988), we will simply note several of the author's assertions here. The text implies, though does not say explicitly, that one must be born into the Śākya caste to be a member. (The text also *does not* specify that the *vajrācārya* initiation should be restricted to Vajrācārya sons.) It is also important that when describing the qualities of a good *vajrācārya*, "purity" (New. *śuci*) figures prominently (cf. Tambiah 1985). The *Jana Jīvan* recurringly underlines the point that if a *vajrācārya* priest is worthy, he can guarantee the supramundane destiny of laymen.[15] Finally, it is noteworthy that the authors make a case for five divisions of rank in the Newar *saṃgha*:

Mahāyāna Sūtra Pandita Vajrācāryas
Vajrācārya Ritualists
Bhikṣu Bande
Cairak (Śākyas)
Śrāmaneka (Śākyas)

Authoritative texts in Newar ritual tradition

Finally, attention must be drawn to the texts that are claimed as the traditional sources of Newar ritual authority. Hardly known in western scholarship, these works require further investigation. A list of these texts shows the authors' wide-ranging acquaintance with Sanskrit documents. In brackets, I have indicated the number of *ślokas* quoted from each:

{6} *Saṃvara Tantra*[16]
{50} *Mañjuśrī Pārājikā*
{24} *Nema Sūtra Pārājikā*
{6} *Kriyā Saṃgraha*[17]
{2} *Prāṇigrahaṇa Vidhane*
{11} *Bauddhoktaḥ Saṃsārāmaya*
{7} *Piṇḍa Vidhāne*

We can only note that these texts have been mentioned since Hodgson's time as part of the Newar textual tradition (Lewis 1984: 452), but none are in the Newar Buddhist collection of well-known texts, the *Nava Dharma*.[18] The "*Durgati pariśodhana maṇḍala*" is also cited (although the tantra is not quoted); the recitation of this *dhāraṇī* has an important role in modern Newar Buddhist death rites (Lewis 1984: 377; Skorupski 1983).

III. Notes on the authors and the text

The Rana government that ruled Nepal despotically from 1846–1950 consciously sought to undermine Newar culture and limit traditional celebrations. Once the Ranas were deposed, publishing in Newari was allowed and a very vibrant literary culture emerged in the Kathmandu Valley. Poetry, fiction, and historical publications soon appeared, as did a host of religious texts and tracts. Newar Buddhists who saw the decline in their *vajrācārya saṃgha* were quick to resort to the printed media to restore the older tradition's fortunes, especially in the context of Theravadin missionizing (Kloppenborg 1977; Lewis 1984: 494–517). Badri Ratna Bajracarya and Ratna Kaji Bajracarya have been two of the most prolific writers in this field. Vajrācāryas of Kathmandu City have long been recognized as the preeminent ritual specialists in the Newar *saṃgha* and it is not surprising that these authors are members of *vihāra*s in the capital city.

The *Nepāl Jana Jīvan Kriyā Paddhati* is a very schematic outline of the chief life-cycle rites, with minimal, though revealing, statements justifying important observances in the Newar Buddhist tradition. Although somewhat inconsistent in its citations, the text quotes verses from Sanskrit sources that authorize the particular ritual being presented. Following these quotations, the rules and regulations are stated in simple Newari. There are forty-one subject headings and I have translated all Newari headings and text. The Sanskrit verses are included in the transliterated text of Part V, transcribed exactly as quoted in the original.

The language of the *Jana Jīvan* is very terse, intermixed with Sanskrit vocabulary, and more often resembles shorthand than accomplished literary composition. Orthographic renditions of vocabulary words vary irregularly in the text, often contrary to classical Sanskrit norms. (Prominent examples are the interchangable "b" for "v" and "l" for "r", irregularly reduplicated consonants, and jumbled sibilants.) I have rendered the language in close to literal form and preserved the authors' style divisions but with numbers added to ease reference with the text. The footnotes are also minimal, designed to explain important technical terms and the most obscure references. There are many points and topics that require additional elaboration (and further study), but this is a task for later publication.

IV. Translation

NEPĀL JANA-JĪVAN KRIYĀ PADDHATI by Badrī Ratna Bajrācārya and Ratnakāji Bajrācārya. Kathmandu: Annapurna Press, 1962.

1.

In the life of the Nepalese people, from the time of birth up to the time of death with the *piṇḍa* duties, etc., for all the required duties we will give an explanation.

The mother and father as two people marry and afterwards a birth will occur. Both are proceeding on the road of possible joy and happiness.

In the middle of the woman's *yoni*, there are two *nādis* that extend to the right and left sides. Into the left *nādi* the semen seed descends; into the right *nādi*, the blood seed descends.

Just as the inherent nature of the *Dharmadhātu*[19] is one thing so in the middle of the *yoni* the two things – the man's semen and the woman's blood – are joined as one thing. Having been joined, particle goes to rest in the mother's womb.

At 1 month, after having gone into the uterus of the mother's womb, it will seem like a dirty substance after having been mixed with semen. At 2 months after slowly moving, it will seem like a grain of sleep dust. At 4 months it will seem thick.

At 5 months, after air (*vāyū*) has entered into it, it will take on the fish form;[20] the hands, feet, head, body and every part is very tiny and will (change) quickly. And so the eyes, ears, nose, tongue and mind, i.e. the 5 parts,[21] will be filled up with the 5 substances.[22] At 6 months, the bones and cartilage will be solid.

At 7 months there is head hair, body hair, and nails.

At 8 months the sense organs are complete and sensitive. After the 5 materials are complete, birth occurs at 10 months.

2. Cutting the umbilical cord

After the birth, in order to protect the baby, and thinking that one must guide the nine-limbed newborn one to be naturally intelligent, one puts the umbilical cord on a nutmeg and cuts it.

After cutting the umbilical cord, one washes (the child) and plays auspicious music. And then, having given a gift, one performs a ceremony. From the time of the cord cutting, one observes restrictions.[23]

3. Release from birth pollution

To be released from childbirth (restrictions)[24] according to tradition, one gives *Kalaśā abhiṣeka*[25] to the baby and offers best wishes.

Having put ghee and honey on a pipal tree leaf, and having done *pūjā* according to the rules, one feeds these to the baby.

Having assembled 6 *pathi* of barley grain on top of a leaf (and putting this on Śrī Mañjuśrī's *maṇḍala*), one puts 60 lights around the leaf and [the Vajrācārya] does the 3 *samādhi* meditation and all *pūjās*.

And again, according to the planet *sādhana* guide, one writes the horoscope; having analyzed the planet *pūjā* [the Vajrācārya] recites the *mantra* of the 9 planets [*grahamātṛkā*].

4. Name giving

According to the caste, the *Nāmā karma* ("Name Giving") at 10 days, 12 days, or 20 days is proper.

5. Showing the sun

To show the child the sun is proper after 1 month or 4 months. The influence of this rite will be to protect the child and make it auspicious.

6. First rice feeding

At 6 months or 1 year[26] one gives the child fruit. Then having assembled the following – book, pen, cloth, clay, raw cotton, paddy – one shows all to the child and lets him/her choose one. Based upon which is taken, having thought about the result,[27] one again gives rice.

7. In-house protection (Jaṃko necklace)

One collects together the following things as symbols of the following deities, joins them into a *kuhmākā* thread and if one puts this around the child's neck, the child's welfare will also be sure and he will be protected.

Deity	*Substance*
1. Āditya	Gold
2. Śoma	*Hiular*
3. Bhañgal	Costus speciosus
4. Budha	*Sobhāy* fruit
5. Bṛhaspati	*Patak*
6. Śukra (Indra)	*Jatamas* herb
7. Śaniścar	Iron
8. Rāhu	*Harthe*
9. Ketu	Copper
10. All together	Silver

8. Opening the throat

On the day after *anna prāśana*, having done a *kalaśa pūjā*, one does a Dharma *pūjā* that opens the throat of the child. Also, one touches the *hasaṃ*[28] to the baby's mouth and throws it out in the *lakhu*.[29] One then gives *sagaṃ*.[30]

9. First hair cutting

The ritual of *cūḍākarma* (or *bartabandhaṇa*) and piercing the ears is done according to the tradition of the different castes, i.e. whether Brāhmaṇa,

Ksatrīya, Vāiśya, Śudra. It is the same (in name) according to the work. Time is reckoned from fertilization in the womb, and from year seven until year twelve, one can do this *cūḍākarma* and ear piercing.

10. Initiation as adult male householder[31]

(A rite for males): Between years 7 and 12, when the *bartabandhaṇa* is performed, one cuts the hair, leaving the *aṃgsā*; one cuts the nails, and then sesame and *amba* are used for bathing. Following the rules, one does a *pūjā*. Then one gives an arrow, water pot, and stick, and sends the child to the forest. If he is one who prefers to stay a householder, one carries the child to the (nearest) outside Ganeśa, gives alms, and brings the child home. Then there is an auspicious celebration.

11. First monastic initiation[32]

Again, (if) one lives at home, one cuts the hair completely (including the topknot (*āṃgsā*)) and the nails. After he puts on *kāśi*[33] clothing, the 5 teachings and 10 teachings[34] are given.

So having been sent to the *saṃgha* for the 3 refuges and having taken the *śiślāku*[35] in the right hand and the begging bowl in the left hand, the *saṃgha* will give instruction in the Six *Pāramitās*[36] and then be told of the *Catur Brahma Vihāra*[37] and the Aryan Truths.[38]

Having been given the *Koṭi Sikṣā*[39] and the *Bodhisattva Jñāna*,[40] if one acquires both of these, he is called "*Bhikṣu*". And even if he acquires 1/4 of these two, "*Śrāmaneka*". And even if he acquires 1/2 of the "*Śrāmaneka*", he is called "*Cāiraka*". And among these three, the best is the Bhikṣu. But they cannot perform the *homa karma* (*pūjā*).

12. Initiation as Vajrācārya

If one is born into a Śākya clan, after the *Pravarthya Grahaṇa* is acquired, that Bhikṣu is called "Bande". After the Bhikṣu [stage], the one having the *grahaṇa* of the vajra and bell is called "Śrī Vajrācārya", and reaches the highest stage.

For the one who can pass the *Nirmāṇa* level[41] but has no other higher aspirations, one gives him the *vajrācārya abhiṣeka*. And he will have all rights such as [doing] *homa karma*, etc. That man who has these two – the *vajra-ghaṇṭha* initiation and the right to perform *homa karma*, he earns the status of *Vajrācārya*. If one has the [title] "Mahāyāna Sūtra Pandit", he will give the most auspicious *darśana*.

13. Marriage[42]

On the right date and right moment, one looks for a girl with a body possessed of good characteristics.

The girl lustration maṇḍala pūjā

Having washed the girl's body and anointed it, one waves a lamp (around her), respectfully submits to the god, and performs the *visarjana*. Then one gives her a marriage sari to wear and provides various ornaments.

The bride, holding a recepticle that contains yellow and red and gold powders, worships the god and the *gurus*.

And then, the (groom) gives *sindur* to the bride's hair part.

14. Gift of a virgin girl[43]

One puts salt, molasses, 3 kinds of flowers, betal nuts and leaves, ginger, etc. on a feast leaf plate.

Writing a *Svasti* figure on the bride's hand, after putting flowers, a *byā* fruit, *tāy*,[44] *ākhe*[45] on a *jyonaṃ lapte*,[46] one closes her hands, saying the *Saṃkalpa*[47] and he [the priest] gives the *kanyādāna* to the groom.

15. The Nikṣāḥbhū

This ritual is performed on the next day of the marriage but is not found everywhere. Some do it, some do not.

16. Dressing the hair

The second day after the wedding, the groom performs *keśa bandhana*, or "wetting the hair", combing the hair, etc. Nowadays only some people like to do it.

17. (Girl's) confinement

At the time of *bādhā*, the *kalaśa pūjā* is done and the girl who is living in the dark room must fast and then stop [eating]. In a dark room, the girl doing the *bādhā* must be controlled. She must not be see the sun's rays or a man's face. After 12 days of this and after a purifying bath, she must have *darśana* of the sun.

According to tradition, having done the *sūrya maṇḍala pūjā*, she is sent to the nearest temple, or she is sent [specifically] to a Ganeśa temple. She is given, after returning, curd *sagaṃ* and then the egg *sagaṃ*.[48] This is done only for girls.[49]

18. Bhīmaratha jaṃko (1)

When a man or woman reaches the age of 77 years, 7 months, and 7 days, the son will do *upanayana jaṃko* for his mother and father.

Having read the *graha mātṛkā* from the *Graha Sādhana* book and done a *pūjā* on a *graha maṇḍala*, all should purify themselves by cutting their hair and nails, and by bathing. This is called *kṣurakarma* (*upanayana*).

The *bhīma ratha* rite is observed by the old person who has seen 950 full moons. Having made the horses and *ratha* according to their clan custom, they will do the *bhīma ratha*.

19. Devaratha jaṃko (2)

After that, again after the old person has reached 88 years old, 8 months, 8 days, after seeing 1000 full moons, at the time of the full moon, the *deva ratha jaṃko* is performed.

Or else, it can be at when the old person reaches 80. [If so,] one makes the *maṇḍala* of Śrī Basundhara; and having drawn the 8 female demonesses [*yakṣī gaṇa*] around it, one does *pūjā* and requests the 8 powers (*siddhi*).

20. Mahāratha jaṃko (3)

And again, at 90 years, 9 months, 9 days, after 1200 full moons, there will be the *mahā ratha kriyā*.

Just as at the time of the *bhīma ratha*, having completed all the things, having made the horses and drawn the *maṇḍala* of Uṣṇiṣavijaya,[50] the *mahā ratha* is done.

21. The ripening of karma

Birth, suffering from disease, and old age – all these 3 things are the result of the previous birth. From the time of being in the mother's womb, the different types of disease etc. are all results from the previous births.

Paralysis, jaundice, flu, fever, the four diseases, and great troubles – these are also the result of the *puṇya* and *pāp* of one's previous life.

Whoever becomes sick, [he sees] the best doctor who examines the nerves, and diagnoses the patient's disease looking at the tongue, wrist, and urine. This doctor (*bāidya*) will say which disease it is and give the appropriate medicine.

If one is afflicted by dangerous *nāgas*, deities, *piśācas, pretas, bhūt*s, or big enemies, to get rid of these afflictions one does the *bali karmaḥ pūjā*,[51] etc. For each different type, there is a way to make each one peaceful.

For those *ācārya* doing *siddhi sādhana*, one must use [curing] *mantras* for a long time. If this is not successful, then it is a planetary influence and the one must show the horoscope to him [astrologer].

Having studied the chart, the astrologer will tell [the afflicted] of the influence of the planets and suggest doing a *graha dāna pūjā*. In this way, one must do many things for [achieving] the good result which will be for their life's welfare.

Still, if after having done *pūjā* to the *kula devatā*[52] and having done the *svasti*

bācā pūjā,[53] he may be suffering from a great fatal disease and even though all kinds of remedies are tried, the disease may not be removable.

In order for the *prāṇavāyu*[54] to exit from one of the 9 orifices (from the ear, etc.), a powerful medicine [must be given] to increase the respiration. *Bāitaraṇi dāna*[55] is given to *guru ācāryas*.

Again, according to the regulations, the cow *dāna* is offered. Afterwards, having poured empowered *argha* water on the legs, the priest will recite the *kula devatā*'s and other mantras [to the dying person].

Only the *prāṇa* will go out from the body because there is only the *prāṇa* left. That *prāṇa* will go out from the body and go to Yama's gate.

Immediately, [Yamarājā] will show to the being his own karma level. If good, the result will be good; if bad, a bad result. (It is all according to one's own karma [and] he will have to take the result of that karma).

22. First death rites

After death, one does *Utkrānti yoga*.[56] To do this before death is not appropriate. If done then, we will go down to hell quickly.

So that only if we know death has come should this be done.

23. After-death observances

After life is finished, the dead body should be in contact with iron (or a knife) for protection. Alongside the head, [there should be] a lamp; next to the legs, also, another lamp. (If possible, lamps should be put all around the body.)[57] The *prāṇa* goes out and it may return, but if iron or a knife are put there, the *prāṇa* cannot return into the body. If they are not there, the *prāṇa vāyu* upon return will enter [the body] again and so will become an *agatī*.[58] Therefore, we must keep iron on the dead body and this is the reason for its presence.

24. Coming to the depository for impure things

One must throw out the clothes of the dead one, his old clothes, his personal things, the waistcloth, the mat he used, etc. at the same *chvasa*[59] where his umbillical cord was discarded. So that the dead one's disease, etc. cannot be transmitted, his clothes, things, etc. must be thrown at the *chvasa*. It must be done for this reason.

25. Smoke fumigation

At the *Pikhā luku*[60] and in all the dark room concerns, one places a clay pot with the burning cow dung [inside]. The smoke must be brought around the house to all places. If done well, the disease and smell of death etc. and the germs will be removed.

26. Removal from the house and making the litter

White clothes ("*duḥkhā pikhāṃ tike*") [will be given to the dead body]; write a *svasti* on the floor covered with cow dung where the body is lying. The white cloth must cover the entire body. A *Mahādigu* lamp must be made.[61] The dead body will be taken out to the stretcher; and around the stretcher are placed the *aṣṭamangala*, flags, flowers, etc. [Throwing] together onto the stretcher *tāy*, flowers, *tika*, *abira*, [attendants] put the body into the litter. [They then go to the ghat.]

House furification

After the body is taken out, the whole house is swept out and the dust is taken to the *chvasa*.[62] The dead body has left behind insects of disease which can be transferred – therefore the broom and dust pot are also thrown out [there].

27. Death procession

At first, the ground is swept, then water and *kumbum*, etc. are sprinkled. After burning incense is lit and rice thrown, the *ācāryas* chant the *Durgati Pariśodhana Dhāraṇī*. The words "*Yama Bādya*"[63] are made audible and the *Maṃgala Bādya*[64] are played along the way to the *śmaśāna*.[65] At the *śmaśāna*, wood is piled up and on this wood the dead body is placed down. Before the rite of burning begins, all relatives come to give holy water [*tīrthajala*] to the dead body.

28. Observances at the dīpa

In front of the dead one, put out the *kāka piṇḍa*,[66] the *preta piṇḍa* and *svāna piṇḍa*.

If the father is dead, the eldest son gives the flame; if the mother, the youngest son. *Śrāddha* must be done before the flame. If [there is] no son, the wife or brothers are responsible. If no brothers, then the *goṣṭhi* (*phukī* members) must do the rites.

(If this *kāka piṇḍa* is offered, the person will not be born as a bird. If the *svāna piṇḍa* is offered, the person will not be born as an animal. If *preta piṇḍa* is offered, the person will never be born in the place of the *pretas*. If these three *śrāddhas* are offered, person will be safe from these three destinies.)

If the *kāka piṇḍa* is offered, all the works will be successful. If the *svāna piṇḍa* is offered, the [dead one] will see the *dharmamārga*.[67] If one does the *preta śrāddha*, the dead one will be free from the *preta* destiny.

One must give the fire to the mouth of the dead body. The dead body must be burned at the riverside *dīpa* (and the fire rites done) because at the riverside or in front of the *mātṛkās* are never-ending sacrificial places. Therefore, the dead body is like a great lamp burned and offered before [them].

29. Disposal of the ashes

After 3 days, there is the "washing-the-bones" *pūjā*. The *nali pūjā* is done ([for which] one makes a *bhasma cāitya* with the ashes) and the remaining ashes will be thrown in the river. On the 5th day, 6th, 7th day, the remaining ashes are thrown in the river, in stages.

30. The **durgati pariśodhana maṇḍala** *(and other) customs*

On the 6th day, the *durgati maṇḍala* is made and a *pūjā* is done. The *aṣṭi tāraṇa pūjā*[68] is also done and also the *Aparimitā* text is recited on the 5th, 6th and 7th day. And again on the 7th day, the bone ash will be put inside a copper/brass *cāitya* and the *cāitya* will be sealed after a *pūjā* of establishment. Later it will be thrown into the *pañca tīrthas*.

31. Seventh day [rites]

Again on the 7th day behind the *pikhā lukhu*, a cooked rice meal (dal and vegetables) is given.

32. Setting out cooked rice [beneath the eaves]

Again on the 7th day, in the night (after most people are asleep), up into the air (from a window) a rice feast is presented and left. ([It is called] *pākhājā khāye*.)

33. Release from death pollution

And again all family relations will go together to the river and according to their own [caste] rule will cut the hair, cut the nails, take a bath, wear new clothes and take the *pañcagavya* and purify themselves.[69]

While at the river, take *āti*,[70] *amba*,[71] sesame, oil seed, *kvo* oil, etc. and all who have lived in an impure state through [this] washing will become pure.

34. The betal nut rite and house repurification

Vajrācāryas [after] 7 days; for others, [after] 12 days: take betal nut and leaf together with a tooth stick, and then after and having taken betel *sagaṃ*, do the *homa karma* and the house will be purified.

35. Ten **'piṇḍa'** *ritual*

Vajrācāryas on the 7th, others of the various castes on the 10th day do the *śrāddha* of the ten *piṇḍa* etc. and the *preta piṇḍa*.

Why do the *daśa piṇḍa*? On the 1st day, *piṇḍa* is for the head; the second day for the eye; the 3rd day for the nose; 4th for the ear . . .

On the 5th day, for the heart; 6th for hand; 7th for stomach; 8th for sense faculties/organs . . .

. . . On the 9th day for the leg; 10th day for hair, nails. If the 10 are completely done [the dead one] will be complete in manifesting [new] body parts.

36. Eleventh day **'piṇḍa pūjā'**

Again, on the 11th day, the *ekādaśi piṇḍas* are given. When this is done, [the dead one] will take birth in one of the 4 [human] *yonis*.

37. [Other] **'piṇḍa'** *rules*

Again, in the name of the dead one at 1 1/2 months, at 3 months, 6 months the *piṇḍa dāna śrāddha* will be done.

After one year the same *piṇḍa dāna* must be done in the dead one's name.

38. The **'lina piṇḍa'**

For this *śrāddha* to be done, there must be 3 generations. If it is a man, the man's father, and grandfather, and great grandfather will be offered *piṇḍa*. If it is the mother who died, the mother, grandmother, great grandmother. In this way we bind together the 3 generations and do *pūjā* to the Buddha, Dharma, and Saṃgha and take refuge in the *Triratna* together.

For the man whose son is dead and whose father is alive, he need not do *lina śrāddha*.

We do *lina śrāddha* equally well in a house, in the mountains, at a *tīrtha*, or a very holy place. When doing *śrāddha*, one must wear suitable clothes for worship and the food, etc. must be fitting. If the food is impure or the clothes are bad, do not offer [them]. At the time of *śrāddha* worship use only good, fine, pure things together.

39. Regarding the priest

To do *śrāddha*, what kind of guru is needed? He is one living in good society; he must have a good soul, control over his sense organs, not be talkative or greedy, and one who is easily satisfied. He knows all of the rites; is willing to donate his time for free; he is pure (*śuci*). Those type of priests with these traits [should be called] to do the *śrāddha*. If such types do the *śrāddha*, then a very good result follows and the dead person will be completely satisfied.

In doing the *śrāddha*, if one retains a priest who has an evil soul, always chatters, eats excessively, is unsatisfied, not clean, and quarrelsome: with the such a priest, don't do *śrāddha*. If he is [evil] like this, [we know] that in and *pitṛloka*, having been unsatisfied, the dead one will return [to the house] go to hell.

40. Śrāddha

On the Kārtik full moon, if one offers *piṇḍa*, this is called *dharma piṇḍa*. If this is done, the dead one will get these 4 results – *artha, dharma, kāma, mokṣa.*[72]

During [the months:] Kārtik, Śrāvaṇa, Bāiśākh, Māgha, in these 4 periods one also does *śrāddha*. These days are good for doing *piṇḍa dāna*: on Kārtik *punhi*,[73] Māgh full moon, Śrāvaṇa during the thirteenth day of the dark fortnight, or Bāiśakh *tṛtiyā*. One has to do *piṇḍa śrāddha* on these days. If done on these days, the dead one will without doubt get countless merit.

If *śraddha* is not done on the day of death, or if *śrāddha* is done on another day, it will be useless and the clan will be undermined.

If someone is not free from the impurity of death or if a woman is menstruating, she should not do *śrāddha* for it will be useless.

After 12 pm and up to 3 pm do the *śrāddha piṇḍa*. After sunset, *śrāddha* is prohibited.

While doing *śrāddha*, put rhino meat inside the *piṇḍa*. If a small piece is kept and the *piṇḍa* is offered, due to the reaction of the rhino meat the dead one will get lots of meat and be very satisfied always.[74]

To make *piṇḍas*, one should use the best food – *jāki, baji*,[75] rice flour barley wheat flour, etc. But not corn flour or millet flour, as these are proscribed.

Having made ghee, honey, milk, curd, etc. together with meat of various kinds, and having prepared flowers, incense, lamps, perfumes, and food offerings: in whoever's name this is [be offered], in that one's name one offers *piṇḍa*.

To do *śrāddha*, one sits on a *kuśa* grass mat and offers libation vessels etc.; in just this way, generations from long ago until the present time have offered the main *piṇḍas*.

After that, one puts out a *vikala* [*piṇḍa*] and for any *śrāddha*, one makes this *vikala*. If one doesn't put out *vikala* [*piṇḍa*], then even if one performs an infinite number of *śrāddhas*, they will all be fruitless.

Having been born into our lineage, there is no one who does not have an older or younger brother, or sons; and again, persons who have been set in a mother's womb and been miscarried; or older and younger brothers who have been deformed in many forms, or younger and older sisters who have lived in the world in this state: all these who have received the libations on the earth should be satisfied. Those dwelling in the wrong path and lacking in [good] *saṃskāras*, to all these deformed ones (*vikalas*), we should give *piṇḍa*s.

When doing *piṇḍa dāna*, you should not put them in an iron pot, [clay] pottery, or wooden vessels; if someone does this, the recipient will go away without taking it and feel disappointed.

During the *aṣṭami vrata*, if you offer multi-colored flowers, – white jasmine, fragrant flowers, etc., it will only satisfy those in the *devaloka*. For the offerings to reach *pitṛloka*, it is not fitting to offer these. If they are offered, the beings there will not be satisfied.

If the magnolia, fragrant green flower (*masvāṃ*), lotus, *tahapyaṃ* flower or *cihapyaṃ* flower are offered, those in the *pitṛloka* will be satisfied.

If sesame seeds, *kuśa* grass, water, flowers, etc. are offered together with mantras, they will satisfy those from the *pitṛloka* and they will go away sustained. (It is not faultworthy to omit one or two of these things). But sesame and *kuśa* are essential.

If there is no *kuśa, śrāddha* will be fruitless. *Kuśa* is the best thing for ritual performances. Particularly for *śrāddha, kuśa* is best of all.[76]

After finishing the *śrāddha*, the copper vessel [*kollā*] which contained the *piṇḍas* should be put out on the *pikhā lukhu*. One should pour water around it three times clockwise, then three times in a counter-clockwise direction. The *jajmān* should face west and pour while the priest chants the concluding verse.

Having hopefully given as much succor as possible to all beings, say [to the *pretas*], "Return now to your own places from whence you came before."

41. The place for discarding 'piṇḍa'

If you can throw away the *piṇḍas*, throw them at the stones for this [*pyaṃgā*][77] or else at a *tīrtha*, or in a pond. After that, offer a savory feast to all relations and friends.

V. The text[78]

NEPĀL JANA-JĪVAN KRIYĀ PADDHATI by Badrī Ratna Bajrācārya and Ratnakāji Bajrācārya. Kathmandu: Annapurna Press, 1962.

1.

Nepāle jana jīvane janma maraṇāntaśca kriyā /
Kathayāmyahaṃ piṇḍa karmādi kañca yathā vidhim //

Nepāla jana jīvanyā busāṃ nisyeṃ sināvanā piṇḍa karma ādi bidhi-bidhāna kriyā takyā khaṃ vyākhyā yānā haye //

Samvara Tantra:

Mātā pitā disaṃ yogā dāikṣayedbhava janmina /
Ati Nirbhara Sānandaṃ sukha mārga praveśyate //

Māṃ abu vaḥ nima milana jula dhāvyaṃ janma jvīgū sambhavajvī ānanda sukhayā mārge māḥṃ abu vanā cvani /

Dva nādyo yoni madhyetu bāma dakṣiṇa yosthathā /
Vāme śuklaṃ vijāniyā dakṣiṇe raktamevacaḥ //

Māṃyā yoni madhye javaṃchapu khavaṃchapu nādi vayā cvaṃgudū khavaṃgu nādi śukla bija hāyā cvana javagu nādiṃ raktabija hāyā cvana /

Tayo mīrlana mekatvaṃ dharmadhātu svabhāvataḥ /
Śukla śoṇi tayormadhye bindu rūpeṇa tiṣṭhati //

Dharma dhātuyā svabhāva gathe chathi jvīgu kha athe he yoni madhye abuyā śukla māṃyā rakta thva nitā lvāka jyānā chati juyā bindū rūpaṃ māṃyā garbhe macāchemṃ cvaṃ vani /

Pratharma kalalā kāraṃ ayur dañca dvitīyakaṃ /
Tṛtīya peśīto jātaśca caturthaṃ dhanamevaca //

Thanali māṃyā garbhe macāchemṃ bija vanā lachi daibale śukla bahī lvākajyānā bhyātathyemṃ cvani nilā daibale jhulu jhulu sanā pyāca thyemṃ cvani pelā daivale khvātuse cvani /

Vāyūnā pūryya mānusya macchākāram tatobhavet /
Pañcamāsa-gataṃ bījaṃ pañcaspho ḍaśca jāyate //

Nyālā daibale vāyu duvinā macchākāra jvī lhā tuti kṣoṃ śarira chagu chaguyā bhāga cicidhaṃkaṃ chakolaṃ dai hānaṃ cakṣu śrota ghrāna jihṇā mana thathenyātā ādi vyañjanaṃ pūrṇa jvīḥ (kvoṃ semṃ pvāye khulāṃ pūrṇa jvīḥ)

Keśa roma nakhā cinhāḥ saptamāsena jāyate /

Saṃ cimisaṃ lusi nheylāṃ dai /

Indrīyāṇica rūpāṇi vyañjanā nyaṣṭa māsataḥ /
Saṃpūrṇa navamāsyana cetanā daśamā sataḥ //

Cyālā daibale īndrīye saṃpūrṇa saṃjātajvī vyañjanaṃ saṃpūrṇa juyā jholāṃ janma jvī /

2. Nābhi Kṣedana [Pidhenegu]

Mañjuśrī Pārājikā:

Navāṅga bīja vinyāsāiḥ sarakṣerjāta mānavā /
Cheda yeśca tato nābhi śūnyatā bhāva pūrvakaṃ //

Janma juma mānava macāyāta rakṣā yāyegu nimite gūgu aṇgayā bija tayā prajñā svabhāva juyemā dhaigu bhāva pūrbakaṃ jiphole pīḥditatakāva pīḥdhene /

Tathāivaḥ snāna dānaśca maṅgalotsāha vardhayet /
Nābhi cheda kṛte paśyā yasmācca sūtakaṃ tadā //

Nābhi chedana yāye molhuke maṇgala vādya thātake anali dānakarma yātake utsava yāye / gukhunhū pīdhena ukhunū nisye sutaka keni //

3. Jātakarma [Macābu Beṃke]

Mañjuśrī Pārājikā:

Sūta kānte prakūrvīta pūjāsatkarme kārayata /
Abhiṣekaṃ tato dattvā aśirbāda dikaṃ pūnaḥ //

Macābu beṃke kriyākarma bidhi anusāraṃ yāye macāyāta kalāṣābhiṣeka biya hānaṃ āśirvāda nāṃ biye /

Dharṭañca madhumca sthāpayat kuñjarāśana patre /
Pūnaḥ ghṛta madhu prāśañ ca vidhivat kārayat //

Ghyo kasti ogalasīmā hale tayā vidhivata pūjāyānā macāyāta hānaṃ ghṛta madhu prāśana yāye /

Tathāiva pujayet sarvaṃ samādhi traye bhāvanā /
Sāli Dhānyāñca ṣaṭapaṣṭa ṣṭhīdipaṃ prajjvālayat //

Hānaṃ puvāphaḥ khupha dvocine boyā dyone (śrī mañjuśrīyā maṇḍala sallākāśa cvayā taye) 60 khuipvā mataṃ cāuyeke / Trisamādhi bhāvanā phukaṃ pūjāyāye //

Tathāiva kārayata pūjāṃ jāgareṇa vinikramam /
Graha mātṛkāṃ samabhyarcya yathoktaṃ grahasāghane //

Hānaṃ vidhi anusāraṃ graha sādhane dhayāvaṃ thyeṃ janma patrikā coye graha pūjā jāgaraṇa cvane graha mātṛkā pāṭha yāke /

4. Nāmā Karma [Nāṃchuye]

Mañjuśrī Pārājikā:

Daśame dvādaśe cādidvāviśehanivā punaḥ /
Nāmakarmaṃ prakarttavyaṃ varṇā nāñcā viro dhataḥ //

Varṇānusāra nāmākarma yāye (macāyāta nāma chuya) varṇa anusāraṃ jhinu khunu naṃ jyu jhinīnu khunū bā hānaṃ nīnuḥ khunu naṃ jyu /

5. Sūryyajope

Dirghā rakṣantu bālānāṃ maṅgalārthaṃ samanvitaṃ /
Māse tritiye caturthebāladarśa yedraviṃ //

Macāyāta sūryyajope lachinaṃ jyu pyelānaṃ jyu thuli krīyāyā prabhāvaṃ macāyāta āpālaṃ rakṣā jvīḥ //

6. Phala Prāśana Anna Prāśaṇa [Macā Jamko]

Anna prāśana ṣaṣṭhe vā cāṣṭe samvatsare thavā /
Tanīñca pūraskṛtya śrāstrādi śilpa karmakaṃ //

Khulā va dakṣiṃ macāyāta phala praśana yāke saphu jyābha alaṃkāra tisā vastra cāḥkapāe vāḥ masi kalam puthi thuli vastu saṃdyukta yānā macāṃkāeke macāṃ chuchukāla vava phala bicā yāye hāna macāyāta (anna prāśana) jānaṃ nake //

7. Gṛha Rakṣā [Jaṃko Kokhā]

Nemasutra Pārājikā:

Āditya rakta pāsāṇa vacaḥ śomaṃ tathāivaca /
Kūṭa maṃgārakaṃ jñeya śrīpadaṃ budhame vaca //
Patantī guru vidyāyā śukro jyoti smatistathā /
Lohaṃ śaniścara jñaya rāhoścahaṭha vijakaṃ //
Tāmraṃ ketośca vijñeyā janmato ropya mevaca /
Etāiśca graha rakṣantu bālānāṃ hitahe tave //

Ādityayā lulugu 1 śomayā hiulara 1 maṇgalayā kūṭa 1 vudhuyā sobhāya phala 1 vṛhaspatiyā patak 1 śukrayā jatāmāsa 1 saniścarayā naḥ 1 rāhuyā herṭhe 1 ketuyā sija 1 janmayā vaḥ thuli saṃyukta kuhmākāsa honā macāyāta kogvāyake macāyāta sadāṃ hita jvīḥ rakṣa jvīḥ /

8. Kaṇḍha Śodhana [Kaṇḍhakhu]

Anna prāśanayā kanekhunu kalaśa pūjāyānā dharma danke kaṇṭḥa khuya janmajuma macāyāta mhutuī hasaṃ vāke sthāna lukhusa choya sagaṃ biya /

9. Busakhā

Mañjuśrī Pārājikā:

Cūḍākarma karma bheda yathā saṃkhyana karṇayat //
Brāhmaṇa kṣatriya vāiśyā śudrānāi ca tathavaca /
Garbhātsaptama varṣevā yāvata dvādaśā vatsare //

Cūḍakarma brattabandhaṇa nhāyapaṃ pvākhane karmakriyā yānā haya brāhmaṇyā kṣatrīyā, vaiśyā, śudrayā kathathyeṃ uthyeṃ uthyeṃ karmayāy garbhye cvasāṃnisye nhaydaṃ nisye jhiṃnidayā bhitre cūḍākarma karṇabheda yāye //

10. Bartabandhaṇa

Saptame dvādaśe varṣe vartavandhañcaṇa kārayat /
Kṣora armādikaāñca pūnaḥ cūḍāśire sthāpayat //
Vidhivata bālānāṃ tita dhātreṇa snānamā caret /
Kesu daṇḍaṃca śara yajño paviti pradāpayat //

(Mijaṃpiṃtaḥ yāyegu kriyā) nhere bā jhiṃnirayā bhitre bartabandhana yāye saṃkhāke āṇgsātayeke lusī dheṃke hāmo amba laṃ molhuke bidhivata pujāyāye / Śara, jvanā phosi kathiḥ la lhāya vanāntara choya, gṛhasthā rambhasa conima julasā sthānalakhu gaṇedeke yeṃkā (pikhālukhusaṃ) bhikṣā viyā cheṃ dutahaye maṇgalotsava yāye /

11. Pravarthya Grahaṇa

Tataḥ keśāna vatāryaḥ sthāpayeca śikhāśire /
Kāṣāya pañca pradātavyaṃ daśa śikṣā padaṃ pūnaḥ //

Hānaṃ chene cvaṃgu saṃ pācuka dhene (āṇgsānaṃ dhene lusi dhenegu kāśāya bastra pūnakā pañcaśikṣā daśasikṣā sametaṃ viya /

Saṃghā ṭriṇiñca darśaṇaṃ śikṣiskīrī kāñca pradāpayat /
Ṣat pāramitā samādāna māryya satyādi samvaraṃ //

Saṃghapiṃke triśarṇa choyā piṇḍapātra kuṃdhāra śiśalāku laba lhātha śaṭa pāramitā upadeśa viya catur brahmavihāra āryya satyanaṃ kane /

Mañjuśrī Pārājikā:

Tadagra koṭi śikṣāñca bodhī cattaṃ pradāpayet /
Etesaṃ grahaṇāt bhikṣu śrāmanera tadarddhakam //
Cāirakañca tadarddhena trayayāna bibhāvanāt /
Sarvaṃ ṣāṃmagraṇi bhikṣū yajña kāryyā dibarjjitaṃ //

Anaṃli koṭi śikṣā biye anaṃli bodhicitta jñāna biya thuli jñāna lāmayāt bhikṣu dhāye thuliyā bachiyā bachi śikṣā lāmayāta śrāmanneka dhāye thvate śrāmennekayā bachi śikṣā lāma cairaka dhaya thvaḥ svamasiyā bhānra thathe thvaḥ svamasiyā madhye uttamama bhikṣū dhāya thumisaṃ homa karma yāye madu //

12. Vajrācāryābhiṣeka

Kriyāsaṃgraha:

Śākya vaṃśa prajā bande janmanāca prajāyate /
Pravaryyā grahaṇāt bhikṣu punarābṛti vajra dhṛk //

Śākya vaṃśa janma juyā pravarthyā grahaṇalāma bhikṣuyāta bande dhāye / Hānaṃ bhikṣu karmmaṃ vajra ghaṇṭha grahaṇa yāma uttama śrī bajrācārya dhāye //

Mañjuśrī Pārājikā:

Nirvāṇā śraya bhūtatvānnira pekṣā svabhāvataḥ /
Vajra ghaṇṭhā dikaṃ homa sarva karmmānu sāghanaṃ //
Dvābhyā meva pradātavyaṃ vajrācāryya padaṃ punaḥ /
Sūtrādi mantra pāṭhaṃca maṇḍalaṃ darśaye tathā //

Nirmāṇa padayā śreṇī lākamaḥ mebayāke upaīcchā mayākama thathiṃmha bhikṣuyāta vajraghaṇṭhayā abhiṣeka viye homakarma ādiyā sarvādhikāra jula bajraghaṇṭha thva nitā abhiṣeka lāmesita hānaṃ vajrācārya padabiye mahāyāna sūtrādi paṃ- pāṭha maṇgala darśana biye //

13. Pāṇi Graha

Kriyā Saṃgraha:

Śubha tithi nakṣetre kaṃnyāṃ pari kṣapet /

Bhiṃgu tithi bhiṃgu nakṣatre sūrakṣaṇaṃ saṃyuktam lakṣanaṃ paripūrṇa ma kanyā svayāhaye (yajña prāṇi graha vidhi kriyānusāra yāye) /

Kanyā Lasvaye Maṇḍala Pūjā

Tadanu kanyā śarire śodhanaḥ nirāñjana prākṣāṇa bastrādiḥ /
Visarjjanaḥ devatādi praṇāsa bastrādi sarvā laṃkāra dadyāt //

Kanyāyāta śarire śodhanaḥ nirāñjana lvāhā rakṣā vi mataphaṃ tvaye devatā anyāke visarjana yāye īparasiṃ sike anega tiśāṃ tīke //

Rakta kaṃcūka sūbarṇa mūdrikā sindhūra /
Bhānjanaṃ saṃgṛnhya debā gurūbe dāpayat //

Mhasinha rakta candana cūṃuḥcūḥ tayāgu sinha battā kanyāṃ jvaṃkā dyoyāta gurupinta chāyake biye /

Paścāt kanyāyāi sindhuraṃ vāroyaṃ samāro hayat /

Hānaṃ kanyāyāta siñce sinha chāyakeviye modakinaṃ tayu /

14. Satabhedikā Taye

Prāṇi Grahaṇabidhāna:

Ādrā labaṇa guḍaścāiva pīta kāṣṭha madanaṃ tathā /
Śobhāṃjanaṃ macchā tāmvu rādi rājā kṣata apicantathā //

Pālu, ci, cāku, mikusiṃ, madaṃpho, śobhāyphala, ṇā, byā, gvaye, tāy, ākhe, jyonā lapte, pocinā kanyāyā mhaduchī kuhmakā satachītu kāye ghānā kanyāyāta kokhāyeke (isalāpā lālhāye) /

Haste nandā bali likhitvā śrīphalaṃ dudyāt /
Lājā kṣatasthāpayat pūnaḥ rājya pattrena pāṇāu bandhayat //

Kanyāyā lhāte svasti coyā vyājvaṃkā tāy ākhe tasyaṃ jyonāṃ lapteṃ lhāpo cikeḥ kanyā saṃkalpa yānā kanyādāna puruṣa yāta lava lhāye /

15. Nikṣāḥbhū

Nikṣābhū dhayāgu vivāhayānā kane khunu yāyegu / Thva kriyā guli guli sithāṃjaka du / Gulisiyāṃ mathā /

16. Keśa Bandhana [Saṃ Pyāke]

Vivāha yānā svanu dukhunu yāyegu kriyā yāta kesavandhana arthāt (saiḥpyākegu Dhāī) / Puruṣaṃ bhāryyāyāta saṃpyākegu samā ādi yākegu thvanaṃ guliguli siyāṃ thva kriyā mayā /

17. Nārī Jāti Yāta Yāyegu Kriyā Raja Śolā Bidhi [Bādhā Taye]

Vādhā cvani khunu kalaśa pūjā vādhā cvanimesīta dhalaṃ danke bisarjjana yāye / Bādhā koṭhāsa vādhā conimesita vādhā kothāsa sone (vādhā taye) / Suryyayā kirṇa jaḥ mavayaka vālaṃpyane arthāt sūryyayā kiraṇa jaḥ makene mijaṃpinī khvāḥ makene thukathaṃ vādhā tayāgu jhiṃinhu dayava śuci snāna yākā sūryya darśana biye / Vidhi pūrbaka sūryya maṇḍala pūjā yāke sthāna laskhus choya arthāt gaṇe deke choya sagaṃ bīya thuli kriyā misāpinta jaka yāīgu /

18. Bhīmratha Kriyā (Bṛhat Nara Bṛhat Nārī Jaṃko 1)

Nema Sūtra Pārājikā:

Saptasapti barṣāni mānica dinā nica /
Upanayanaṃ yathā kāryyaṃ pitā putreṇa kārayat //

Nheye nhayada varṣa nhayelā nhaynu dayva bāu māṃyāta kāya macāṃ upanayena dhaigu jaṃko kriyā yāye /

Graha mātṛkāṃ puraskṛtya yathoktaṃ graha sādhane /
Kṣura karmā dikaṃ sarvaṃ sacāila snānamā caret //

Grahamātṛkā pāṭhayānā graha sādhane gathe dhayā vana vathyeṃ grahamaṇḍala daykā pūjā yānā kṣura karma dhaigu saṃ luśī dhenā sakala siyāṃ śuci snāna yāye /

Pañca nava śataṃcandra dṛṣṭtvā kṛta bhīmarathaṃ /
Yathākula viśeṣena aśvādi ratha yojayet //

Gusalava nyemha pūrṇacandramā khaṃmesina bhīmaratha kriyā yāye viśeṣanaṃ thagu kule cale jugu thyeṃ sala ādiṃ saṃyuktagu ratha dayekā bhīmaratha kriyā yāye /

19. Devaratha (Jaṃko 2)

Nema Sūtra:

Aṣṭa Śitica varṣāṇi māsanica dinānicaḥ /
Deva ratheti bikhyālaṃ sahasra candra dṛśyate //

Thanaṃli hānaṃ caye cyāda varṣa cyālā va cyānu dayeva dochimha (pūrṇacandramā darśana lāgu belāśa) devaratha dhaigu jaṃko kriyā yāye /

Basubarṣa samāpūrṇā basudharārcanaṃ kuru /
Aṣṭāi yakṣa sama biṣṭhā aṣṭāu siddhica prārthayat //

Athabā cayeda varṣa jaka puke juyevaṃ jyūḥ śrī vasundharā yāgu maṇḍala cothā cyāmaḥ yakṣanī gaṇaṃ cāuyekā pūjā yāye aṣṭa siddhi phone /

20. Mahāratha (Jaṃko 3)

Nema Sūtra:

Nava navati varṣāṇi māsānica dinānica /
Mahā ratheti bikhyātā dvādaśa śata candra dhṛk //

Thanaṃli hānaṃ guyeda gulā gunhu puke juyeva jhiṃ nisala candramā darśana prāpta juyeva mahāratha kriyā yāye /

Pūrvat sarva saṃyukta yajña veda prakalpayet /
Uṣṇiṣa vijayaṃ cāiva kṛtvā maṇḍala muttamam //

Nhāpā bhīmaratha kriyāsa dhaivaṃthyeṃ sakatāṃ saṃyukta yānā yajñśālā daykā uṣṇiṣa vijayayā maṇḍala coyā mahāratha kriyā yāye /

21. Karma Vipāka

Janma byādhi jarāmatyū garbha sthānāni dehajam /
Sṛjyate sarvasatvā nāñca nānābyādhi samuṭ bhavam //

Janmajvīgu rogajvīgu vṛddhājvīgu thva sakala pūrvajanmayā phalaṃ māṃyā garbhe cvasāṃ nisyeṃ juyāvaī hānaṃ ane anegu roga utpatijvīgunaṃ pūrbajanmayā phalaṃ /

Bāṭa pitta kaphaścāiva sanni pātādi rogajā /
Catuyrotare mahā vyādhi magh puṇyādi dehajam //

Vātapitta kapha sannipāta catur roga ādi mahāvyādhi utpati juigunaṃ pūrvajanmayā pāpa punyayā phalaṃ /

Tesubāidyo tamonādi jivhāmūtra parikṣayā /
Cikitsā kārayet vāidyo yathānāya yathāṃ vidhi //

Suṃ gumhesita roga juī uīta uttamama vaidyaṃ nādi svayā meḥyāgu coyāgu parikṣā svayā (śarīre jugu) gugu roga jula ugu roga anusāraṃ vāsa yāyi /

Āgantu kādi doṣeṣu ghoraduṣṭa bhayānnakam /
Balikarma vidhiścāiva nānā śānti prayogata //

Hānaṃ ghora duṣṭa bhayānakapiṃ bhūta preta, piśāca, deva, nāga, pinigu doṣalā dhakā balikarmmaḥ pūjā ādi yānā aneka prakāraṃ śānti yāyi /

Siddhi sādhana mācāryyo mantrayogeṇa sādhayat /
Grahadoṣa samuda bhūte jātapatra pradarśa yat //

Hānaṃ siddhi sādhana yāīpiṃ ācāryyapisaṃ mantra proyoga sādhana yaki graha doṣalā dhakā jāta kenī /

Ādi tyādi graha duṣṭe tatodānaṃ samā dadet /
Tathāiva pari māṇantu niru jānmā navā caret //

Thanaṃli jāta kenā jyotisaṃ dhathāhatheṃ ādi tyādi grahayāgu doṣa dhakā grahadāna yāyi thugu prakāraṃ parimānathyaṃ manuṣyapisaṃ jiu thāyetaka thagu jiu upakāra yāyi /

Sveṣṭa dāiva vata pūjāne svasti vācāna karmmaca /
Mahā mṛtyū samutapanna mupāyena naśāṃmyati //

Hānaṃ thamha kula devatā yāta pūjā yānā lipā svasti bācā karmanaṃ yāyi tara mahā mṛtyū jvīgu roga utpatti jvībale nhāguhe upāya yāsāṃ rogalāī makhu /

Prāṇa karṇa gata svāsa mahāuṣadhi dadatte tam /
Bāitara pyāṃ tato dadyāṃ dācāryya gurūbhyaḥ yathā //

Prāṇavāyu nhāyapaṃ ādiṃ nabadvāraṃ phāhā vaneta svāsa thāhā vai ugu bakhate tadhaṃgu auṣadhi gutikā nakāvi guru ācāryapinta baitaraṇi dāna yāyi /

Gāudānaṃ vidhi nāścāiva pādayo jala bindutā /
Sveṣṭa devatādi mantrādi nūccāryyā kārayaddhit //

Hānaṃ bidhi pūrbakaṃ sādānanaṃ yānāvi thanaṃli pālisa arghajala tayā thaḥ kula devatādi yāgu mantra nyaṃkā biyi /

Prāṇamātra śariraṃca tatra tyaktvā gabonkuśām /
Prāṇa mukto bhavetpusā yamadvāreṣu gamyate //

Sarire prāṇa mātra danigunaṃ sarira yāta totā prāṇa pehāṃ banī thvamanuṣya sarira tyāga yānā yamadvāre vanī /

Svasva karma kṛtaścāiva karma bhūmi pradarśakaṃ /
Durgati sugati cāiva svakarmma phalaṃbhavet //

Thathaḥgu karmaṃ yānāgu karmma bhūmi kenegu yeni durgati jusāṃ sugati jusāṃ thamaṃyānāgu karmayā anusāraṃ (karmayā phale yani) /

22. Utkrānti

Utkrānti kālasaṃ prāpta makāle deva ghāta kam /
Devaghātena mātreṇa narake pacyate dhruvam //

Sinā vaneva utkrānti yoga yāye sināya mavaṃkaṃ utkrānti yoga yāy majyu yāta dhāsā yākanaṃ narake lāvani /

Tasmātmṛtyu cinhānī jñāyatetu vica kṣaṇāi //

Atheyā kāraṇe kāla jñāna sikājaka utkrānti yāye /

23. Mṛtyu Kriyā

Anti kriyā sidhayava mṛtyuyā aṇgsa lvāhā rakṣā (naḥ arthāta cakū) tayā phusa likvos mata chapvā chapvā taya (phatasā mata cha cālaṃ cāuīke) naḥ cakū taya viyāguliṃ prāṇa bāyū pihāṃvane dhūṃkūgu hānaṃ lyāhāvayā praveśa jūvaye phaimakhu sime siyāmhe naḥ tayā mabila dhāsā prāṇa bāyū hāna lyāhāṃ vayā prabeśa jvauyo totāvane dhaṃkūgu prāṇabāyū hānaṃ lyāhāṃvayā praveśa jula dhāsā agtītvaḥ lāvaneyo atayba akeṃ jhisaṃ simay mhenaḥ tayā vimāgu kāraṇa juyā cvana /

24. Chvāse Vāyegu

Mṛtyūya bastra tvakā athabā vayāgu phulāṃguvasa vagāgu āsana (arthāta sukhū) nābhi paṭṭana bandha bastra (jani) thuli janma jūbale pīpāye śā ītyāc vāṃ choyagusthāne (chvāse) vānchoya mṛtyū juyā vaṃesigu roga ādi sare juyā vaigu bhae dugujuyā nimtīṃ uīgu bastra ādi āsana sudhānta chvāse vāṃchoyaṃke māgu juyā coṃgu kāraṇa ukeṃ /

25. Pākhākūṃ Thanegu

Pikhā lukusa, pākhā kunasa, tayā bhājane micyākā sepāḥ yāgu kūṃ thane, thva sapāyāgu kūṃ cheṃ chakhāṃ neṇka thanāgu nimtī mṛtyūyāgu roga gandha ādi kitānu nāsa juyi /

26. Duḥkhā Pikhāṃ Tiya, Sāu, Sāyegu

Śvetabastraṃ (duḥkhā pikhāṃ tike) sausāya ata eva gomaya arthāt (gobar) naṃ svasticoya svasti coyāgu sthānasa mṛtyūya aṇga dikā sveta-bastra mṛtyūyā mha chamhaṃ bhunā mahā digu dayake (ataeva duḥkhā pikhāṃ tiya) / Va sthānaṃ pitahayā aṣṭamaṇgala kikinījāla phayagaṃ puṣpamālā dhvaja ādi saṃyuktagu ratha athavā (kūṭā) lesa tayā tāye avira svāṃ, sinha ratha chaguli nyaṃka abiraṃ chvākā /

Picāṃ Vāya

Samapitayaṃke dhuṃkā che chakhāṃ bapuyā bapuyāgu dhūḥ dhūvayāgu thala-maṃ chvāse vāṃchoyayake / Sinhāḥ vaṃmesiyā lvaya sarejuī dhakā bapuyāgu tuphi dhūvayāgu thala smetaṃ bāṃchoya yaṃkemāgu /

27. Sithaṃ Yeṃkegu

Mañjuśrī Pārājikā:

> *Pratamaṃ bhūmi saṃsakāraṃ dutiyaṃ jaladhārakaṃ /*
> *Tṛtiyaṃ kūmkūmaṃca agurañca dhupaṃca tathā /*

Caturtha dhānya kṣipet pañcamaṃ dhāraṇi pathet /
Yamavādyādi savdādi maṃgalāu bādyaghoṣayat /

Nhāpāṃ bhumi saskāra bapuyekā laḥ dhātayakā kumkūma ādi agura dhupa thanakā vā hoyekā ācāryapisaṃ durgati pariśodhana dhāraṇi boṃkā yama bādyayā saṇḍa nyeṃkā maṇgala bādya ādi thākā thuli mārga śodhana yānā śamsāne yeṃke (śamsāneyā jajñasa siṃ pacinā vahesipasa mṛtyū deha taya / Thaḥ thiti parivāra sakasinaṃ tirthayā jala mṛtyūyāta jala tarpaṇa biya) /

28. Dīpe Yāygu Kriyā

Buddhotkaḥ Saṃsārāya

Mṛtyūsyāgre kāka svāna preta tṛ piṇḍa dāpayat /

Mṛtyūyā nhyone, kāka piṇḍa preta piṇḍa, svānatṛ piṇḍa thayeke /

Piṇḍa pradāna putreṇavā bhāryyāvā bhṛkenavā /
Punaḥ bhāya sukartavya saḥgotra vāndhavāḥ dibhiḥ /

Putraṃ piṇḍa thayake athava putra madusā bhāryyā (kalā) naṃ thayake kalānaṃ madusā dāju kijāṃ thayake hānaṃ thvatena sūṃ madusā goṣṭhi ādi (phukītesam) thayake /
(Kāka piṇḍa thayāgu pūnyeṃ paṃśikule janma jūvanīmakhu, svāna piṇḍa thayāgūlīṃ jantuyā kule janma kāye mālī makhu, preta piṇḍa ayāgulīṃ pretagatī ādi tiryaka gati mocana jūī) /

Kāka piṇḍa pradānena kāryaṃ siddhica hetave /
Svāna piṇḍa pradānena dharma mārga pradarśayat //

Kāka piṇḍa thayāgulīṃ sakala jyā siddhajuī svāna piṇḍa thayāguliṃ dharmayāmārga (lapu) khani /

Preta piṇḍa pradānena pretagati mocayat /

Preta piṇḍa thayā viyāguliṃ preta gati arthāt (preta dhāekā janmajvī mālī-makhu) preta gati mocana juī /

Tasmāi vāgni mukhaṃ kāryya mṛtyaḥ agni saskārayat //

Mṛtyūyā mūkhe (mhutuī thathe agnau saskāra yāke) (Dipe yaṃkā saskāra yāyamāgu chāy dhāsā mātṛkāyā nhyonebā khuśiyā sithe gavaleṃ he visarjana majūgu yajñasālā ata eva mṛtyuyā sarira mahādigu daykā tayāgu cyākā bā āhuti biyagu kāraṇa khaḥ) /

29. Aṣṭi Parikṣāraṇa

Mañjuśrī Pārājikā:

Tṛtīye hani saṃ prāpte kartavyāsthi sacaya /
Bhasma Sātaṃ pūnaḥ kṛtvā roṣa bhasmāni vāhayat //

Svanu khunu aṣṭi sile pūjāyāye śamśānasa, nali, pūjā yāye hānaṃ (bhasma caitya) daykā pūjā yāye lyeko bhasma khusi cūyke/Aṣṭi parikṣāraṇa pūrvata nyānu khunu khunu, nhenu khunu naṃ, yāy māla /

30. Durgati Parisodhana Mandala Kriya

Mañjuśrī Pārājikā:

Tṛtiya divasa mārabhya pañca sapta yathākramaṃ /
Durgati śodhanārthañca maṇḍala vartaya kramat //
Nadyāprati sthāpayo aṣṭi cāitya garbhye viśeṣataḥ /
Ami ṭoṭ bhava sūtranca pāṭhayet ca punaḥ punaḥ //

Khunu durgati maṇḍala coyā pūjā yāy aṣṭi tāraṇa ādinaṃ pujā yāy aparimitā pāṭha yāye nyānu khunu, nhenu khunu uthyeṃ nhenhukhunu kaṃsayā (kaye yā) caityasa aṣṭi duthanā saṃkṣipta pratiṣṭhā karma pūjā yāye pañca tīrthasa aṣṭi cuyeka choya /

31. Nhenumā

Tataḥ sapta gate ahanī dināi kasya pramānataḥ /
Odanāi bhāñjanāi sthāpya bhakṣā bhojyaṃca dadāu //

Hānaṃ nhaynu khunu pikhā lukhi nhenuyā jābo biya (arthāt nhenumātaye) /

32. Pākhājā Khāye

Ākāse sthāpayat odanaṃ caḥ dīpa sahitaṃ tathā /
Tato rātre janāi śunya tyasā dadyāta odanaṃ //

Hānaṃ ukhunuhe banisiyā cāne lokapiṃ śunya jula dhāyava ākāśe dīpa sahitaṃ jābo ākāse khānā biya (pākhājā khāye) /

33. Dubeṃke

Sagotra bhātṛ bandhubhyāṃ kṣāura karmma vidhiyate /
Pañca gabya tathā bastraṃ tīrthe snātvā śuci kṛtam //

Hānaṃ thaḥ gotra bandhu dājukījā sakala sīyāṃ khusivanā bidhi anusā-rasaḥ khānā lusi dhenā molhuyā nhugu vastraṃ punā pañcagarbhye kayā śuci yāye /

(Tīrthe āti amba hāmo kvo cikaṃ khau ītyādi kayā aśuddha juyācvaṃgu dehayāta śuddha yāye) mha lhuy /

34. *Gṛha Sūddha Gvāsagaṃ Kriyā*

Saptame dvādase dine homa kūryyāt gṛhe śuci /
Danta kāṣṭhaṃ tāmbulaṃ pūgya phalaṃca prakṣālayat //

Ācāryayā nhenu mepini jhinīnu gvāgve danta kāṣṭa gvāsa[ga]ṃ kayā vāṃkṣoya homakarma yāy gṛhe (cheṃ) śuci jvī //

35. *Dasa Piṇḍa Kriyā*

Nema Sūtra:

Daśama piṇḍa mityuktaṃ preteca sarvavarṇake /

Sinā vamesiyā nāmaṃ sikhunū nisyeṃ nhaynu bā jhinutaka samasta lokayāṃ petā barṇayāṃ daśa piṇḍa ādi preta piṇḍa thaye māla /

Budokta Saṃsārāma:

Prathamaṃca śirojātaṃ dvitiyaṃca kṣūrūtbhavaṃ /
Nāśikāṃca tṛtiyaṃca catūrtha karṇa mevaca //

Daśa piṇḍa thayeguyā pramāṇa chanhuyā piṇḍa thayā biyā gulīṃ kṣoṃ ninuyā piṇḍa thayābiyāgulīṃ mikhā, svanuyā piṇḍa thayābiyā gulīṃ nhāy, pyanūyā piṇḍathayā gulīṃ nhāypaṃ /

Pañcamaṃ hṛdaya ccāiva hasta jātaśca ṣaṣṭayo /
Saptame nābhisaṃ bhūtaṃ īndrīyaṃ jātaṃ aṣṭama //

Ṇānuyā piṇḍa thayābiyā gulīṃ nuga, khunhuyā piṇḍa thayā biyā gulīṃ lhā, nhenuyā piṇḍa thayā bīyā gulīṃ pvā, cyānuyā piṇḍa thayābiyā gulīṃ īndrīya jātajvī /

Navame pāda saṃbhūtaṃ daśame roma saṃbhavaṃ /
Daśapiṇḍa pradānena kāya śṛśtyarya hetuve //

Gunhuyā piṇḍa thayābiyā gulīṃ tuti, jhinuyā piṇḍa thayābiyā gulīṃ saṃ lusi dayā vaī jhinutaka piṇḍa dāna yānā biyā gulīṃ kāya sṛṣṭi jvīḥ /

36. *Ekādaśa Piṇḍa Kriyā*

Pūnaḥ ekādaśa dine eka piṇḍañca dadyāt /
Ekādaśa dine eka piṇḍa phalena yonī prāpyate //

Hānaṃ jhichanu khunu ekādaśa piṇḍa chagva thayābiye /
Jhiṃchanhu khunu ekādaśa piṇḍa chaga thayābiyā gulīṃ (pyaṃgu yoni madhye chagu yonī) janma kāvani //

37. Pinda Thayegu Kriya

Sadipaṃ gata nāmena piṇḍa dānaṃca samācaret /
Tripakṣeca samāsena trimāsa ṣaṭa māsakaḥ //

Hānaṃ sinā vaṃbhesigu nāmaṃ latyāṃ bā svalāṃ piṇḍadāna yānāviya khulānaṃ piṇḍa thiyā biya māla /

Pūnaḥ taṁya mānena varṣa dineca piṇḍa dāpayat /

Hānaṃ dachi dayavanaṃ vaigahe nāmaṃ piṇḍa thayā biyamāla /

38. Lina Piṇḍa

Mañjuśrī Pārājikā:

Pitā pitā māhādināṃ mātā māto mahiyathā /
Buddha dharmanca saṃghanca saraṇaṃ tasyāivaḥ sāgatiḥ //

Piṇḍa thaybale svaṃgu pustā taymā mijaṃ mhasā vayā bau chagu 1 bājyā 2 tāpāya bājyā 3 misāmhasā vayā māṃ 1 ajī 2 tāpā ajī taya / Hānaṃ thvate svapūstāsa lina yāye bhāva buddha dharma saṃgha triratna śaraṇa dhakaṃ /

Jīvateca pitā yasya mrīyaṃteca yadisūt /
Salīnaṃ kāraṇaṃ tasya yasya śrāddha layaṃkūta //

Gumhasiyā kāy sinābani vau mvānā coni umasiyā lina yāyemvā vamhasiyā śraddha lina madu /

Līnāntaraṃ samālatya nāimitike gṛhe /
Tirthacālaya parbate śrāddha piṇḍa prakathyate //

Bhakṣa bhokṣādikaṃ sarba dravyaṃ kūtsita varjjitaṃ /
Saṃpūrṇaṃ nirmalaṃ sūddha sthāpa yatsū samāhitaṃ //

Lina piṇḍa samāna piṇḍa nimitta piṇḍa cheṃ vā parvate vā tīrthe vā saṃpūrṇa śuddha sthānasa piṇḍa thaye hānaṃ śrāddha yāybale chāygu vastū naygu jogyagu bastū chāy mabhiṃgu ayogyagu aśuddhagu bhakṣā bhokṣādi mabhiṃgu bastū machāye bhiṃgu bāṃlāgu śuddhagu saṃpūrṇa yānā śrāddha yayebale chāye /

39. Guru Rakṣaṇa

Mañjuśrī Pārājikā:

Saṃyamo śuddha śuddhātmā jinendriyona sūpratī /
Nirāsi svalpa saṃtuṣṭa kriyāvanta sucikṣaṇa //

Saya vāsāu guru śrāddha sthāpa yaśca samāhita /
Bhave śuddhāica yaśrāddhaṃ akṣayaṃ pitaro gatā //

Śrāddha, yāta, gathīṃmha guruyā mā dhāsā mahāne me cvana cvaṃmha bhiṃgu ātmā īndriya ci phuma mvāyaka mvāyakaṃ namavāmha lobhi majumha saṃtustamha kriyā phukaṃ siumha kṣemāvantamha śucivantamha thathimha guru śrāddhayāke thathimha guru śrāddha yāta dhāsā mahāna akṣaya phala lāī pitṛloka śāntī jvī santusta jvī /

Dūṣṭātmā vacara kruca vavaktā śīkarahaprīya /
Asaṃtuṣṭa śruci bhraṣṭa sa eva guru barjaya //
Nirāsā pita rājānti dātā narakaṃ vajet ///

Śrāddha karmasa gathima guru yāye matya dhāsā duṣṭa ātmā juā cvaṃmha pārā pārā hālā cvane yomha āpā nayephumha asantuṣṭamha aśuci lvāye yomha thathīṃmha guru śrāddha karmasa yāymate athenaṃ yāta dhāsā pitṛloka nirāsā juyā lyāhāvani dātā narake lāī /

40. Śrāddha

Kārtike śukla mārabhya pūrṇerākā dinaṃ pṛti /
Dharmma piṇḍa prakrartavyā catura varga phalāptaya //

Kārtika Pūrṇi khunu piṇḍa thayābiyevadharma piṇḍa dhakā dhāyi dharma piṇḍa thayā biyāguliṃ dibaṃgata juyā oṃmesita catur varga artha dharma kāma mokṣa phala lāī /

Kārtike māghave māghe śrāvaṇe yuganigate /
Kārtike pūrṇimāśyāntu tṛtiyā māghaveśite //

Pūrṇamāsyā tathā māghe śrāvaṇe kṛṣṇa trayodaśi ///
Yena tatra kṛtaṃ piṇḍaṃ aprameyaṃ phala labhyat ////

Kārtikabale śrāvaṇabale va bāiśākhe, Māgha thva pyeṃgu yuge śrāddha karma yāye / Kartikya pūrṇi khunu māghayā pūrṇi khunu śrāvaṇ kṛṣṇayā trayaudaśī baiśākhayā tritiyā khunu thvate yuga yugayā dine dine piṇḍadāna śrāddha yānā biye thva pūnneṃ dibaḥ gata juyāveṃme sita punne thuli ulī lāta dhayāgu saṃkhyā madu /

Mañjuśrī Pārājikā:

Vikṣāteca dinemena śrāddha bhaṃga kṛtaṃ yadi /
Nirāsā pitaro jānti kūlachedantu jāyate //

Gumhasiyā śrāddha yāyegu din makhu, ubale śrāddhayāta dhālasā va śrāddha bhaṅga juī śrāddha bhaṅga jula dhāsā kula kṣaya jvī /

Śrāddhantarā mūlpanne mṛtakeca rajasvalā /
Śutake tasyānteca śrāddha bhaṃga kṛtaṃ yadi //

Duḥkhaṃ māyaka rajaśolā jumesiyāṃ thila bā mavyaṃkaṃ śrāddha yāye mate yāta dhāsā śrāddha bhaṅga juī /

Maghyānevā thavānakta dinānte praharatraya /
Saeva kāla piṇḍa smaniśā kālaṃtu varjjayat //

Vānhīṃ lipā madhyāne nhiṃyā svapahale śrāddhaṃ piṇḍa dāna yāye chāna nibādyo vikāna śrāddha yāye matyo /

Khaḍga māṃsa eka śulkāñca piṇḍa garbhe sthāpayet /
Khaḍga māṃseneka kalpaṃ tusyanti pirāu sadā //

Śrāddha yābāle piṇḍayā dune gayeḍāyā lā svathane chaku ṭukrājaka tayā piṇḍadāna pāta dhāsāṃ chagu kalpa vitejusāṃ (va gayeḍāyā lāyā prabhāvaṃ) śrāddha yānāgu punne bayāta lāḥ vani sadāṃ pitṛ saṃtuṣṭa jvīḥ /

Idaṃ piṇḍa saghṛtā sodasā satvabanā samāṃsā saśāka śrāddhaya
Sarvo prakāraṇa sahitā sarva kūtsīta varjitā yadvi dyaṃte /

Dāsyāmi saḥ puṣpa dhupa dipa gandha naivadyādi saṃyuktā
Divaṃgata yūṣmata tasya nāmena īdaṃpiṇḍaṃ svaghā //

Piṇḍa thayat bhiṃbhiṃgu anna jāki baji jākicūṃ tachocūṃ ādi sāmāṃgri dayake lokapisaṃ niseddha yānā tagu (kanicūṃ dusecūṃ) yā madeke /
Ghyo kasti duru dhau ādi nānā prakārayā upakāraṇaṃ māṃsa saṃyukta yānā daykā puṣpa dhupa dīpa gandha naivedya saṃyukta yānā tvaḥ suyā nāmaṃ khaḥ yathānāmaṃ piṇḍa thaye /

Mañjuśrī Pārājikā:

Kuśāsana margha mātrañca piṇḍa sanaṃ tathāivaca /
Sthāpa niyā pitā purbaṃ pancātpiṇḍani dāpayat //

Śrāddha yāyimha kuśāsane cvanā arghapātra ādiṃ tayā piṇḍa thaye nhāpāṃ pustāniṃ taye mūḥpiṇḍa lipā taye /

Vika tena vinā piṇḍaṃ koṭī piṇḍa vyathā bhavet /
Tasmā dātmanaḥ sarveṣu vikala piṇḍa pradāpayat //

Anaṃli vikala taye nhyāguhe śrāddhenaṃ vikala tayemā vikala piṇḍa matasye śrāddha yātasā koṭi śrāddha yātasā naṃ nisphala jvī /

Piṇḍa Vidhāna:

Yecā aṣmat kulejātā aputro yeca bāndhavā
Ātma garbha virupāca jñātāḥ jñāti kūlemama
Bhūmāudattena tṛpyantu tṛpyatā yāntu parāgartiṃ /

Sarvasaskāra hīna vikala piṇḍa sarvatrāidhātukāṃ
Nivā sināṃ sava pretānāṃ tṛpyatāyāṃ vikala piṇḍaṃ
Mārga saṃśodhanāya vikala piṇḍaṃ saṃprekṣāmisvadhā //

Jimigu kule janma juyā vaṃpiṃ kāy macā dāju kijā hānaṃ suṃ madupiṃ / Hānaṃ garbhasa āmāśaye yānā kodayā vaṃpiṃ guli rupaḥ virupa juyā agatitve lānā cvapiṃ dāju kijāpiṃ sakasyātaṃ vā tatākeṃpiṃ sakasyātaṃ bhumisa cvanagu lakhaṃ tarpaṇa yānā gulīṃ tripta juyamā makhugu mārga gatisa cvanā saskāra hina juyā cvapiṃ sakala sipiṃgu nāmaṃ vikala tayeta piṇḍa biyā /

Lohasaṃ mṛtmayaṃ dārū śrāddha pātrañca varjayat /
Pramādā diyaye yatra datvā. kilvi patā bhavet //

Piṇḍadāna yāyeta naḥyāgu cāḥyāgu siḥyāgu thaletayā piṇḍadāna yāye matya kadācit yāta dhāsā pitṛ nirāsā juyā vani /

Yathāṣṭami vrata eva varṇa gandhañca barjjayat
Mallīkā mātali puṣpa dṛṣdvā tuṣyanti devatā
Nayānti pitṛ asaṃtustaṃ vikankāiva tathāivaca /

Aṣṭami vratasa citra vicitra svāṃ, nasvā svāṃ, jisvāṃ campaḥ svāṃ devaloka jaka yāta saṃtusta jvī pitṛloka yāta hyāṃgusvāṃ, jisvāṃ, campāsvāṃ, nasvāṃ svāṃ, tayā śrāddha chāy majyu dhāta dhāsā pitṛloka asaṃtusta juyā vanī //

Piṇḍa Vidhāna:

Śalojal mallikāścāiva tarka bhṛñgaṃ campakam
Yetāni puṣpa dāṣyanti tuṣyanti pitaraḥ sadā

Casvāṃ, mūsvāṃ palesvāṃ tahapyaṃsvāṃ, thuli śrāddha yāyebale chāta dhāsā pitṛloka saṃtuṣṭa jvī /

Tila vāri kūśaṃ puṣpaṃ mantra yūkto mahārthata /
Saḥ eva śrāddhani juktaṃ tuṣyantī pitarā sadā //

Sarvabhāve kūśaṃ śrṣṭaṃ kūśābhāve byathākriyā /
Sarva kāryye kūśaṃ śreṣṭaṃ yajñe śrāddhe viśeṣaṭ //

Hāmo kūśa lakhaḥ svāṃ thvate ādipaṃ mantra saṃjukta yānā śrāddha yāyebale pitṛlokayāta dohalape samasta pitṛloka saṃtuṣṭa juyāvanī (chatā nitā marusāṃ chuṃ doṣa maru) hāmo kūśa marekaṃ magā /

Kūśa madayakaṃ yāta dhāsā śrāddha yānāgu nisphala jvī samasta kāryya yātaṃ kūśa śreṣṭaju biṣaye yānā śrāddha yajñasa mahā śreṣṭha /

Mañjuśrī Pārājikā:

Vedi kāryyā bahī bhūmāu sthāpayitvāpi bhāṃjanaṃ
Jala dhāra trayaṃ kṛtvāḥ praṇamya paścimā mūkhaṃ /

Pitṛ visarjjayat paścāt gāthāyo nayāsaha //

Śrāddhayāy sidhayava piṇḍa vaṃya tayāgu kollā pikhā lukhusa tayā jaladhārā javaṃ svaka khavaṃ svaka cāuyekā gati biya jajamānaṃ paścim śokā bisarjjana gāthā bone //

Mañjuśrī Pārājikā:

Kṛto va sarva satvārthaṃ siddhi datvāyathā nugā /
Gacchadhvaṃ svasva sthānaṃ pūnarā gamanāyaca //

Sarvasatvayāta siddhiyāye phaigu āśirbāda biyā gathe nhāpā bijyānāgu-khaḥ atheye thaḥ thagu sthāne lyāhā bijyāhuṃ /

41. Piṇḍa Cuyekegu Sthāna

Pretālaya tīrthe tadā pūskare piṇḍa pravā hayat /
Piṇḍa śeṣaśca annanca vāndhavāiḥ saha bhojayat //

Thana piṇḍa cuyeke datasā pretaśilāsa (pyaṃgāle) athavā tīrthe jusāṃ pukhulijusāṃ piṇḍa cuyake anali bandhuvargapinta sakasitaṃ bhaksā bhojana yāke /

Notes

1 Field work was conducted in Kathmandu from 1979–82 and in 1987. The author gratefully acknowledges grant support from the Fulbright Fellowship Program and assistance from the U.S. Educational Foundation in Kathmandu. Ratna Muni

Bajracarya and Mani Gopal Jha merit special thanks and recognition for their most helpful critical readings of the translated text.

2 "Mahāyāna Buddhism and Hinduism should be [seen as] using the same language, having recourse to the same metaphors and often admitting fairly similar patterns of devotion. This is especially the case when it comes to the personal relations established, in both religions, between the worshippers and the Cosmic Supreme Saviour, continually devoting himself to their preservation and final deliverance. The fact that the Hindu name of 'the Lord' (*Iśvara*), appears as part of Avalokiteśvara's usual appellation, has given rise to much speculation. He even has another ... name, Lokeśvara, 'Lord of the Universe', in common with Śiva" (Mus 1964: 464–465).

3 This proliferation of Buddhist ritualism was also characteristic of central Asian areas where Mahāyāna Buddhism dominated (Snellgrove 1987: 347), especially in Khotan (see Emmerick 1968).

4 Modern scholarship has hardly identified or dealt with this genre of texts. The sources of the *Nepāl Jana Jīvan Kriyā Paddhati* are mentioned above.

5 The Mahāsaṃghika sect, likely forerunners of the *Mahāyāna* saṃgha, were present in Licchavi Nepal (i.e. 400–800 AD) (Riccardi 1979).

6 Information in the Tibetan records on Buddhist traditions extant in Nepal suggests the date for this assimilation being no later than 1200. Other studies on Newar-Tibetan connections have been published (Lewis 1988; 1989a). Our data conform to the time of the precipitous decline of North Indian Buddhism, assuming a major transformation due, in part, to the closing down of the greatest Buddhist network that linked the heartland to highland, and on which monks, pilgrims, and merchants traveled across Asia.

7 The *Tattvasaṃgraha*, a *tantra* that often figures in modern Nepalese ritual guidebooks, states, "Even those beings who cling to wealth and food and drink and detestable things, who take no pleasure in the vow and are not proficient in the preliminaries and so on, even they, by acting in accordance with their understanding and entering the *maṇḍala*, will bring to perfection what they have in mind." (Translated in Snellgrove 1959: 211.)

8 Accounts of Central Asia confirm this assessment emphasizing the tendency toward elaborate ritualism in later Indian Buddhist cultural environments (Snellgrove 1987: 347). The ritualism of Tibet also supports this interpretation.

9 In this, of course, Newar Buddhists are like many laymen in the world today: adhering to the old ways of religious life, with little concern for intellectual sophistication. This comparative insight has often been forgotten in the early assessment of Newar Buddhism: writers have often used for the basis of comparison an inflated ideal of Theravāda Buddhist society. Despite the anomalies of caste and saṃgha in the Kathmandu Valley, Newar Buddhist laymen closely resemble co-religionists in other countries.

10 This flexibility was central to Buddhism's success as a missionary religion that was accepted across Asia. The saṃgha's *vihāra*s were essential repositories of the material wealth and core culture of the tradition, just as the *Dharma* contains a host of teachings and stories providing paradigms of spiritual conquest.

11 Tibetan Buddhist traditions also emphasized caste perceptions in its socio-religious domain (Gombo 1982). In medieval and modern Sri Lanka, certain *nikāyas* only admitted high caste individuals for ordination (Gombrich 1971). The caste-related concepts of auspiciousness and purity (Carman 1985) are also quite pervasive in the Newar context and the Kathmandu Valley civilization in this domain conforms to the pan-Indic pattern (Madan 1985; Tambiah 1985).

12 It should be noted, however, that such a catholic spirit is not universally accepted in

Mahāyāna texts (Conze 1970: 121–2). See Lewis 1984: 468–481, where the discussion of Hindu-Buddhist relations is developed in greater depth.

13 As yet, there is not enough historical evidence to determine whether this is a relatively new addition to the Newar Buddhist tradition or an ancient component. Wayman notes the popular Buddhist belief that "after death one must cross a river (called the Vaitarana) with the three current speeds (the karma of the three evil destinies of hell beings, animals, hungry ghosts); if the deceased can cross the river presumably he goes to one of the good destinies (1971: 448)." The *Jana Jīvan* text shows that this general notion is found among the Newars, but *not* in this time frame. If Mus is correct in distinguishing Buddhist *śrāddha* from the Hindu ritual on the basis of the former's offerings to *preta*s as opposed to the latter's *pitṛ*s (Mus 1939: 250), then in this area the Newar Vajrācāryas' *śrāddha* has been converted to the Brahmanical version as well.

14 In a recent work, Snellgrove's pointed out this same duality in Tibetan Buddhist approaches to the karmic juncture that death presents (Snellgrove 1987: 453).

15 This claim is also made by lama ritualists in the Tibetan tradition (Snellgrove 1987: 427).

16 A new edition of the original 1919 translation of this text, with an introduction by Lokesh Chandra, has been published recently (Dawa-samdup 1987).

17 The *Kriyāsaṃgraha* by Kuladatta has been utilized by Wayman in a recent article (1984).

18 The Nava Dharma (also called Nava Grantha) in the Newar tradition are:

Prajñāpārāmitā
Saddharmapuṇḍarīka
Lalitavistara
Subvarṇaprabhāsa
Laṃkāvatāra
Daśabhūmika
Gaṇḍhavyūha
Samādhirājā
Guhyasamāja Tantra.
(Lewis 1984: 447)

19 "Literally, the realm of [all] *dharma*s, this term is used to characterize the totality of existents and hence to demarcate the limits of reality. It is sometimes employed as a title for ultimate reality (Willis 1979: 180)."

20 According to *vajrācārya* informants, this belief derives from Brahmanical theory: throughout the ten (lunar) month period of gestation, the fetus is thought to assume the shapes of the ten *avatāra*s of Viṣṇu.

21 These refer to the five *skandha*s of Buddhist analysis. The term refers figuratively to the "bearer of the burden [of the ego]" (Willis 1979: 188).

22 Those are the five elements: earth, air, water, fire, and ether.

23 Women are confined and the family is excluded from normal social discourse. For all such family observances, the patrilineal descent group (*phukī*) is the unit of ritual observance.

24 The text does not mention the family bathing by the river, with all getting their nails cut and men their hair shaved by a barber.

25 A bath with blessed water from a *kalaśa* vessel, usually obtained by performing a *kalaśa pūjā*.

26 The rite is done at one year only if the *phukī* is undergoing a period of mourning.

27 The choice indicates innate career tendency due to *karma*.

28 A wicker tray that contains ritually polluted foods (*cipa*).

29 This is a small pit located in Newar neighborhoods and every *vihāra* compound, where Śiva as "Luku-Mahādyaḥ" and unclean spirits reside.
30 An auspicious ritually orchestrated snack served by the senior women of the household. There are two types: "yoghurt *sagaṃ* and "egg *sagaṃ*." (See Lewis 1984: 199–202.)
31 Called "keitha pūjā" ("loincloth pūjā") in modern parlance, this rite is performed by all high caste householders.
32 In modern practice this term (also spelled *pravrajya* in classical Buddhist terminology) refers to the *Bare chuyegu* initiations into the *saṃgha* for all Bare. The text omits the first day's proceedings, in which the initiate receives instruction in doing the *guru maṇḍala pūjā* and prepares his hair for cutting (Locke 1986: 57). It starts on the second day.
33 lit. "Benares cloth," an old term meaning a monk's robe.
34 These refer to the *pañcasīla* ("5 Rules") appropriate for the Buddhist householder and the *daśasīla* ("10 Rules") for celibate monks. See Locke 1975.
35 A mendicant's ritual staff, with a Buddhist symbol on the top (Vaidya 1986: 20).
36 The term refers to the "six transcendent stations" of a Bodhisattva: giving, moral discipline, patience, energy, meditation, and insight (Willis 1979: 185).
37 The *Brahmavihāra*s consist of cultivating, through prescribed meditative techniques, four particular feelings: (1) *Maitrī*, love, or friendliness; (2) *Kāruṇā*, compassion; (3) *Muditā*, sympathetic joy; and (4) *Upekṣa*, equanimity (Willis 1979: 96). These are also known in the Pali Canon.
38 The core formula of Buddhist understanding: suffering, its origin, its cessation, the eightfold path leading to cessation.
39 Teaching to awaken the generation of *bodhicitta*, the "thought of enlightenment".
40 This refers to the end of a 4-day period "in the robes" as celibate monk, when the initiate renounces the *śrāvakayāna* and enters the Mahāyāna path. The ideal sought is the Bodhisattva vehicle, and stages of knowledge (*jñāna*) measure one's progress through a series of stages (*bhūmi*s). See Willis' presentation for Asanga's views on this subject (1979: 87–100).
41 This likely means "human level" here, in contrast to higher levels. There is also a suggestion of the initiation imparting supermundane status, as *nirmāna* is used in Buddhist texts to refer to "magically created appearance ... with reference to the bodies of enlightened beings" (Willis 1979: 184).
42 The next sequence describes wedding rites. Coming before the girl's post-puberty ritual it likely reflects the formerly common custom of child marriage.
43 This ritual, called "Thi" today (Lewis 1984: 271–276), is now performed in childhood for girls. Here, again, is evidence that this was once part of a childhood marriage rite.
44 Puffed rice.
45 Unbroken rice grains.
46 Leaf feast plate.
47 The vow that cites all the celestial and location details of the occasion and calls upon beings to witness the event.
48 Two forms of priest-led ritual *prasād* dispersements cum refreshments, done after the auspicious completion of a major event (see Lewis 1984: 199–202).
49 This *pūjā* must be done according to an astrologically determined time (New, *seit*) and before a woman reaches menarche. Popular belief is that if done properly, the pain of the monthly periods throughout life will not be great.
50 This deity is pictured in hanging paintings made for the occasion. These have often been noted as examples of Newar art (Pal 1974).
51 An offering of animal intestines and other impure substances.
52 Lineage deity, also called *digu dyaḥ* in Newari.

53 The rite in which the priest recites the *mangala sūtra*.
54 Lit. "life-force wind". This exists in the body, but is dispersed at death. Here the authors imply that the *prāṇavāyu* is the vehicle of karma.
55 An offering helpful for crossing the river of death, (Skt.) *Vaitarana*, as described above.
56 A secret rite performed in front of the body by the *vajrācārya*. It is done today only for laymen who have taken the *dīkṣā* initiation.
57 Lamps are needed here and on subsequent days to guide the *prāṇa-vāyu* back to its resting place, in case it gets lost in the first movements out after death. It will thus still stay close and benefit from the rituals that follow, even though the iron keeps it from re-entering the body.
58 An unhappy malevolent spirit unable to pass into a new existence.
59 The depository site for dangerous impure refuse in each neighborhood. It is thought to be the specific abode of one Newar form of Hārātī Ajimā, and more generally the haunting place of a host of minor spirits (Lewis 1984: 112).
60 A small carved stone ritual receptacle placed outside the main entranceway of every Newar house (Lewis 1984: 124).
61 A tall lamp made of cloth.
62 Done by the women, who in high caste households do not go to the ghat.
63 lit. "Face Yama".
64 A drum/cymbal music played by untouchables.
65 Caste-specific riverside sites are the norm in the Kathmandu Valley.
66 *Piṇḍa*s are kneaded balls of foods offered to the dead only. See the text for further elaboration.
67 lit. "Righteous Path" or "the Buddha's Way".
68 "Safe passage for the ashes *pūjā*".
69 *Pañcagavya*, the five cow products – milk, butter, curds, dung, urine – are used by Newar Buddhist hierophants.
70 Sugarcane.
71 Myrobalan fruit.
72 The four goals in life, according to Brahmanical literature: wealth, fitting conduct, pleasure, salvation.
73 Skt. *pūrṇimā*, the full moon day.
74 Used in all *piṇḍa* rituals, rhino meat is thought to insure the conveyance of offerings, a belief recorded in the *Mahābhārata* (Briggs 1938: 7–8). Many wealthy Newar Buddhists own a rhino skin vessel for *piṇḍa pūjā*s (Lewis 1984: 322).
75 Uncooked husked rice and flattened rice, respectively.
76 Here is a good example of the complexity surrounding an analysis of Hindu-Buddhist relations. At first view, this appears to be a straightforward Brahmanical adoption by the Buddhist hierophants. But in fact this *kuśa* grass (known in western botanical classification by the Latin name *poa cynosuroides*) is mentioned in many Buddhist accounts, from the earliest records onward, as having been the stuff of the Buddha's enlightenment seat (see Thomas 1927: 71).
77 Every major Newar *vihāra* possesses indented stones for this purpose. This is one rite that binds the laymen to a specific Buddhist establishment.
78 The text presented here is transliterated exactly as found in the original publication. Only numbers have been added to order the headings. Savants will note that the Sanskrit spellings and endings are irregular, in places almost making the text indecipherable. To correct the errors in the published text would be an immense undertaking; the *ślokas* reproduced here stand as a specimen of Newari panditry. Readers interested in receiving a copy of the original *nāgarī* should write to the author.

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THE UNIQUE FEATURES OF NEWAR BUDDHISM

John K. Locke, S.J.

Source: Tadeusz Skorupski (ed.) (1986) *The Buddhist Heritage*. Papers delivered at the Symposium of the same name convened at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, November 1985, Buddhica Britannica Series Continua 1, Tring: The Institute of Buddhist Studies, pp. 71–116.

The political unit known as modern Nepal has existed since the latter part of the 18th century when the first king of the present dynasty, Prithivinarayan Shah, starting from the small kingdom of Gorkha in central Nepal, began the process of uniting the numerous petty kingdoms in the hills into one nation. Over the centuries the hill area has provided a haven for people from north and south, so that the present racial make-up of the country is a mixture of various Asian elements, and Nepal has been called the 'ethnic turntable of Asia'. Prithivinarayan Shah himself likened his kingdom to a flower garden in which flourished the four traditional castes and thirty-six tribes (or sub-castes).

Nepal, however, has existed as a country since at least the beginning of the Christian era, and for most of that period consisted of the Valley of Nepal (or the Kathmandu Valley) plus some of the surrounding hill territory as far east as Dolakha, as far west as Gorkha, north to the Tibetan border and south almost to the plains of India, the amount of territory depending on the fortunes of the various dynasties. The original inhabitants of the Valley are Newars, who still comprise about half its population. Here also there has been a meeting of races and cultures. The Newars have been active traders with the plains and with Tibet from the beginning of their history right down to the present, and the Valley has provided a new home for refugees from India from the time of the Buddha and the rise of the Mauryan dynasty to the time of the Indian Mutiny in 1857. There is a difference though. Throughout the hills, refugees and new settlers tended to settle on isolated hillsides and in the shelter of inaccessible valleys where, until the push for development and modernization in Nepal which began after 1951 and brought improved communications and new opportunities, they remained as closed units, cut off from their neighbours of a different race and culture on the nearby ridges and in the valleys beyond. In the Valley, the newcomers from the north and south were integrated into Newar society, becoming Newars in the

process and making, in turn, a contribution to the cultural fabric of Newar society. As a result the term 'Newar' is not a racial term, but a cultural term, denoting the very rich and complex culture of the society of the Valley. It denotes a people who speak a common language, Newari, and who share a common but diverse culture.

Since the beginning of recorded history in the middle of the sixth century AD the Valley of Nepal has been ruled by Hindu kings. The first historical kings were the Licchavis (c.400–900 AD), presumably refugees from Vaiśālī (near Muzaffarpur in modern north Bihar) who had left their homeland several centuries before rather than submit to the Mauryan dynasty.[1] They were Hindus and ruled 'by the favour of Paśupatinath'. They were followed by a line, or several lines, of kings conveniently grouped together under the name 'Ṭhākurī' who ruled from c.900 until 1200 AD. This is a period of little information as the 'Ṭhākurī' kings left few inscriptions, and what knowledge we have about this period is limited to occasional notes on manuscripts, mostly Buddhist, which end with "copied in the year such-and-such during the reign of king so-and-so". Yet it is clear from what little we know that these kings were also Hindus. They were followed by the Mallas, not a single dynasty, but at least three separate dynasties all claiming Rajput descent and all Hindus who ruled from 1200 AD until the fall of Bhaktapur to Prithivinarayan Shah in 1769. Yet extant historical records show that, from the time of the Licchavis down to the present, Hinduism and Buddhism have existed side by side in the Valley, presenting a picture that is a reflection of the relationship between the two in India throughout the period when Buddhism flourished there. Buddhism appears not as a movement separate from or opposed to the stream of culture of the subcontinent, but rather as an integral part of the religious culture that grew and flourished in its soil.

The Buddhism of the Valley of Nepal is tantric and therefore Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna. It is often said to be unique and it is in many ways. However, it is not unique because it is tantric. It is basically the same kind of Buddhism that one finds in the Tibetan culture, whether within Tibet or among those of other countries who share the same culture, such as the Sherpas and other northern border people of Nepal. The rituals performed by the tantric Buddhist priests of Nepal are the same as the rituals performed by the lamas and basically the same as the rituals performed by the priests of the Shingon sect of Japan. The tantric texts on which their teachings and ritual are based are the same. It is not unique because of the plethora of multi-armed and multi-headed tantric deities (Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, protective divinities). These are found wherever one finds tantric Buddhism. All of these rituals and deities plus the tantras on which they are based can be traced to the great centres of late Indian Buddhism such as Nālandā, Vikramaśīla, Odantapurī, and Jagaddalla.

It is not unique because it is 'mixed up with Hinduism' as has so often been said. At the level of Buddhist dharma, at the level of understanding the meaning of rituals and the meaning of the multifarious deities, the Newar Buddhists are not 'mixed-up' at all. They have very clear ideas. The only ones confused are

the outside observers who are used to seeing earlier and simpler forms of Buddhism which flourish today in a non-Hindu society. David Snellgrove remarked several years ago:

> "We forget that ... Buddhism, being one of several religions which grew and developed on Indian soil, was affected like all the others by the rich and extravagant tendencies which characterized medieval Indian civilization ... Indian styles of architecture with their stylized and symbolic arrangements, were then as much Buddhist as Hindu, for they were all part of the same cultural heritage. Likewise temple liturgies and techniques of *yoga* belonged to an Indian patrimony developed and enriched over the centuries by generations of worshippers and religious practicers, and the craftsmen who produced the images, religious paintings and temple decorations and ritual implements, worked in the same artistic mediums and styles. Śaivite tantrism and Buddhist tantrism presumably developed as the different aspects, conditioned by their sectarian differences, of a common Indian development in philosophical thinking, in approach to the gods, in building styles and all the rest. It is thus a misleading interpretation of events, if one assumes that Buddhism was now suddenly pervaded and corrupted by Hinduism. Throughout the one thousand seven hundred years of its long history in India, Buddhism could find no expression which was not part of the Indian scene."[2]

The uniqueness of Newar Buddhism, however, is related to the fact that it is embedded in a dominant Hindu society confined within a very small geographical area. Buddhism in India flourished in a Hindu society, but within a vast area where it was possible for the monks to truly withdraw from Hindu society to establish their monasteries in relatively remote places where they were less affected by the customs and strictures of Hindu society. In the Valley of Nepal, Buddhism flourished within the confines of the three small walled cities of Patan, Kathmandu and Bhaktapur, where it was very much a part of its (Hindu) surroundings.

In order to understand Newar Buddhism I think it is important to approach it with an open mind and attempt to understand it on its own terms, that is, within the context of its own ideology and institutions, and without prior judgements about what constitutes Buddhism. This is important, because so many western writers on Newar Buddhism begin their treatment by saying that it is an unorthodox, aberrant or corrupt form of Buddhism mixed up with Hinduism. This creates a prejudice in the mind of the reader which precludes any real understanding of Newar Buddhism, because the frame of reference is orthodox (usually Hīnayāna) Buddhism as it is practised today in non-Hindu countries, or as we find it delineated in the classical Buddhist texts which propose the ideals and say little about the way Buddhism was actually lived among the Buddhist population at large.

The Newar Buddhists, like Buddhists everywhere, take refuge in the Buddha, the Dharma and the Saṅgha, but in a Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna context. The Buddha is, of course, the historical Śākyamuni Buddha, but in Mahāyāna and tantric Buddhism the five transcendent Buddhas (Vairocana, Akṣobhya, Amitābha, Ratnasambhava and Amoghasiddhi) are more known and have a more important place in the ritual than the historical Buddha. In a tantric context these five are presided over by the *Ādi*-Buddha or Vajrasattva, the personification of *śūnyatā*. Much of the devotional life of the people centres round the worship of the Bodhisattvas, especially Avalokiteśvara and Mañjuśrī; and the tantric rituals are centred on the *maṇḍalas* of such deities as Cakrasaṁvara-Vajravārāhī and Hevajra-Nairātmyā. The Dharma is, of course, the Four Noble Truths and the Eight-Fold Path, but understood in a Mahāyāna context and practised according to the tantras. There are eight Mahāyāna sūtras and one tantric text which the Newar Buddhists to this day consider to be their canon: *Prajñāpāramitā, Gaṇḍavyūha, Daśabhūmīśvara, Samādhirāja, Laṅkāvatāra, Saddharmapuṇḍarīka, Lalitavistara, Suvarṇaprabhāsa*, and the *Tathāgataguhya* (or *Guhyasamājatantra*). These texts are recognized as the official texts, some of them (especially the *Prajñāpāramitā*) are recited at various times, and the books are worshipped. Today, however, there are few, even among the priestly class, who understand Sanskrit and can study these texts.

All of this is standard Mahāyāna and tantric Buddhism; what is unique is the lifestyle of the saṅgha and the *vihāras* in which they live.

The term *vihāra*, of course, refers to the Buddhist monastery, the place where the *bhikṣu-saṅgha* live. In Newari there are two terms for these buildings: *bāhā* and *bahī*. *Bāhā* is derived from the Sanskrit *vihāra* (*vihāra* > *vāhāra/bāhāra/bāhāla* > *bāhāl* > *bāhā*).[3] The term *bahī* seems to have been derived from the Sanskrit *bahir*, and these institutions were so-called because they were outside or at the edge of the old cities.

The traditional style of the *vihāra* seems to have been handed down from the earliest days of Buddhism, and this can be traced if one looks at the well-preserved cave monasteries of Ajantā and Ellora built in western India some two thousand years ago. There one sees the same pattern that can still be found off the streets and alleys of the cities of the Valley: a series of rooms built round an open courtyard with a special room opposite the entry-way, which serves as the shrine of the monastery. *Vihāras* in Nepal were built of brick and wood and because of both the climate and frequent earthquakes there are no existing *vihāra* buildings which pre-date the sixteenth century. Many institutions are much older than this; and some of the ornamentation – carved windows, roof struts, *toraṇas* – were preserved from earlier buildings and may be as old as the twelfth century. However, even the oldest foundations have been continually rebuilt, often much more recently than one would suspect by looking at the buildings.

The traditional style of the *bāhā* has been best preserved in a *bāhā* of Kathmandu known as Chusyā Bāhā. The present buildings were built in 1649 AD,

though the struts supporting the roof may be a hundred years older. Chusyā Bāhā is a two-storied building of brick and wood built round an open and paved courtyard. The courtyard is sunken and the ground floor plinth is a foot or more above this pavement. Opposite the entrance is the shrine of the *bāhā*, which contains an image of the Buddha sitting in *vajrāsana* and showing the earth-touching gesture. The carved doorway of the shrine has a wooden door of lattice work enabling one to see into the shrine even when the door is closed. Three sides of the ground floor are open halls. One of these is the entrance hall which has two benches and images of Mahākāla and Gaṇeśa set into the wall. These two images are placed at the doorway of each *bāhā* and *bahī* as protective deities.[4] To these is usually added a third protective deity, Hanumān, who is often represented simply by a triangular chink in the wall rather than by an image. In each corner of the quadrangle are two small dark rooms, one with a stairway leading to the upper storey. Each of these four stairways leads to an apartment of three rooms on the first floor. Each of these four apartments is separate with no interconnecting doors or passageways. Above the shrine of the Buddha is a five-fold window, behind which is a large room (*digi*) where the elders of the saṅgha meet, and off which is a doorway leading to the shrine (*āgam*) of the secret tantric deities of the saṅgha. A bay window over the entrance projects over the courtyard, and the outside of the upper storey is pierced by several windows. The outer wall of the ground floor has two other doorways, but no windows. All of the windows of the first floor are elaborately carved, and the tile roof is supported by a series of exquisitely carved struts portraying various deities, each of which is named.[5] Above the roof is a bell-shaped finial (actually an inverted *kalaśa*) known as a *gajūra*. Over the street entrance and also over the door of the shrine is a *toraṇa* or tympanum. The one over the street entrance portrays Prajñāpāramitā (a personification of the Mahāyāna text) and the one over the doorway of the shrine portrays Mahākṣobhya, a tantric form of the transcendent Buddha Akṣobhya. In the courtyard of the monastery are two *caityas*, an image of Tārā and a stone image of Vajrasattva flanked by figures of the two donors of the image.

The structure of a *bahī* is similar but has its own distinctive features. It is also a brick and wood structure, usually of two stories, built round a courtyard. In general it is a simpler structure with less ornamentation than the *bāhā*. There is usually only one opening in the entire ground floor, the main entrance, and usually one mounts a flight of steps up to the entrance. In most *bāhās* the entrance is at ground level. Inside the entrance are the images of Gaṇeśa, Mahākāla and Hanumān. The entire ground floor, except for the shrine, is usually one continuous open hall. In one corner, usually to the left as one enters, is a single staircase leading to the upper storey. The shrine is a small, windowless room situated directly opposite the main entrance and offset from the rest of the building so that it is possible for devotees to circumambulate it. The upper storey usually has a projecting balcony which enlarges the space, but like the lower floor it is usually undivided and a continuous open hall except for a single

blind room directly above the shrine. This room houses the secret tantric deity of the *bahī*. The first storey of the building usually has three or five windows on the outside, except for the side of the building which houses the shrine, which has fewer. The balcony running round the upper storey is frequently enclosed with lattice screens. The upper storey often has another balcony extending out over the entrance to the street. The roof is wide and overhanging, and the space under the roof is usually unused. Above the shrine is a small temple-like structure: a sort of hanging lantern or cupola.

This seems to have been the traditional architecture of a *bāhā* and *bahī*. However, few today conform to this prototype. The *bahīs*, if the buildings have survived at all, have more consistently maintained the traditional architecture. Many *bāhās* today consist of a courtyard with residential buildings, most of which have been constructed at different times and often in different styles, with a *bāhā* shrine opposite the entrance. The shrine has preserved certain distinctive features: a carved doorway with lattice work surmounted by a *toraṇa* and flanked by two small, blind windows. Usually the entrance to the shrine is marked by two stone lions. The first storey of the shrine usually has a five-fold carved window and contains the *digi* and the *āgam*. If there are more than these two stories to the shrine the upper stories, which often have living quarters, may have over-hanging balconies, carved windows or even modern glass windows. The roof, which may be of tile or corrugated iron sheeting, is commonly surmounted by one or more finials, often in the form of a *caitya*.

Especially in Patan, there are places where the shrine is much more elaborate, becoming in fact a modified, multi-roofed temple set into the complex of buildings round the courtyard. The facade of the shrine is often decorated with a profusion of Mahāyāna and tantric deities, some of stone or cast metal, others done in repoussé brass or gilded copper. The facade of a number of these shrines has been covered with gaudy, ceramic tiles. At Bhince Bāhā in Patan the shrine is actually a free-standing temple of three roofs.

There are a few examples of another type which might be called an extended *bāhā* complex: a very large courtyard (almost as large as a football field and sometimes resembling a park) surrounded by residential buildings with a *bāhā* shrine located along one side. The courtyard is usually filled with images and *caityas*. Perhaps the best example of this is Bu Bāhā in Patan.

Another type of *bāhā* is what I have called the modern *bāhā*. This consists of a courtyard surrounded by residential buildings with a small Buddha shrine somewhere in the courtyard but not a separate section of the buildings. Sometimes the shrine is entirely free-standing, either set to one side or in the centre of the courtyard. Sometimes it is a small plastered shrine set against one wall of the courtyard building. I call these 'modern' because all the examples encountered were founded or built within the past one hundred to one hundred and fifty years, and seem to reflect the deteriorating economic status of the *bāhā* communities. There are no complete *bāhā* complexes, such as Chusyā Bāhā, which have been constructed within the past hundred and fifty years. Even reno-

vations of old shrines after earthquakes or the ravages of time tend to be simplified structures or 'modern' *bāhās*.

Whatever the present style, there are three essential elements to a *vihāra*: the shrine of the Buddha, a *caitya* and a tantric shrine.

The image of the Buddha, known as the *kwāpā-dya* in Newari, is the centre of the non-tantric worship of the community of the *vihāra* and his shrine is the one shrine which is open to the public. The current term *kwāpādya* is a contraction of *kwā/koca-pāla-deva* which is found in earlier inscriptions. This in turn appears to be a Newari variant of the Sanskrit term *koṣṭhapāla* which is found in one fourteenth century inscription and is used as a synonym for the Buddha.[6] *Koṣṭhapāla* means a guard, watchman or storekeeper and hence the current tradition that the term means the 'guardian of the saṅgha'. In Patan one also finds the term *kwāpā āju*, the 'guardian grandfather'.

In most *vihāras* the *kwāpā-dya* is an image of the Buddha sitting in *vajrāsana* and showing the earth touching gesture. This is also the iconographic form of the transcendent Buddha Akṣobhya. Some claim that the image is always the historical Śākyamuni Buddha and not the transcendent Buddha Akṣobhya; but in some cases we have inscriptions, put up at the time of the consecration of the image, which clearly state that the image is Akṣobhya (especially in Kathmandu). Over fifty percent of the *kwāpā-dya* images are of this form of the Buddha. The next most popular image is a standing Buddha figure showing the boon-granting gesture with the right hand and with the left hand raised to the shoulder level and gathering up the ends of the robe in an elegant sweep. This is a popular form of the Buddha in Nepal: very ancient and certainly pre-tantric. Nepali scholars identify this gesture as the *viśvavyākaraṇa-mudrā*, and popular devotion identifies the image as Maitreya[7]. There is no justification for this hand posture (*mudrā*) or for the identification of the image as Maitreya in standard iconographic texts, but it is certainly common in the oral tradition of the Valley.[8] Some of the images are one of the other transcendent Buddhas, Padmapāṇi-Lokeśvara or Maitreya. All of the *kwāpā-dya* images are non-tantric deities except for one image in Bhaktapur of Mahāvairocana. The images face north, east or west. The favoured direction is north, with over half of the shrines oriented to that direction; east and west are about equally divided. The shrine never faces south as this is considered inauspicious – south is the direction of Yamarāja, the lord of death and the underworld.

In the courtyard of every *vihāra* is a *caitya*. The *caitya* or *stūpa* has from the earliest days been the specific symbol of a Buddhist institution. Many of these *caityas* are small stone monuments only about three feet high, and most of them are not over six feet. A few *vihāras*, however, such as Sigha Bāhā, Yatakhā Bāhā and Mahābū Bāhā in Kathmandu, have been built round large *stūpas*. Especially in Kathmandu the *caitya* in the courtyard of the *bāhā* is often given a lime whitewash with the result that after several centuries it appears as a shapeless white mound or white spire. Popular folk devotion calls such *caityas* 'Aśoka Caityas' in the popular belief that they were all erected by the Emperor Aśoka.

In addition to the official *caitya* in every *vihāra*, one often finds an array of other votive *caityas*, erected by members of the saṅgha or by lay people, in memory of the deceased. In nearly every *vihāra* courtyard in Patan and in many in Kathmandu and Bhaktapur, one also finds a *maṇḍala*, either entirely of stone or of repoussé brass (or copper) mounted on a stone base. The *maṇḍala* in question is the Dharmadhātuvāgīśvara *maṇḍala*. This is one of the largest of the tantric *maṇḍalas* and the central figure is Mañjughoṣa, a form of Mañjuśrī considered in this *maṇḍala* to be of the family of Vajrasattva.[9]

The third essential feature of the *vihāra* is the *āgam*, or tantric shrine, where the initiated members of the saṅgha gather to worship the secret tantric deities of the saṅgha. The deities in question are most frequently Cakrasaṁvara-Vajravārāhī but occasionally Hevajra-Nairātmyā or one of the other tantric pairs.

Another feature of most of the *vihāra* shrines is the *toraṇa* or tympanum over the doorway. In ancient India the *toraṇa* was a decorated arch or arched doorway leading into a shrine. In Nepal this has become a semi-circular decorated panel over the doorway of a shrine (whether Hindu or Buddhist), whose main figure usually depicts the deity in the shrine. However, in the case of the *vihāras*, the figure is often another form of the Buddha, a tantric figure or a representation of an aspect of the Dharma.

The outer circle of the *toraṇa* is identical in almost all cases. In each of the lower corners is a *makara* (sea monster) facing out. Above the *makaras* rise swirls of vapour often personified with figures of deities and ending in the coils of two serpents with human heads. The coils of the serpents are held fast by a figure above. This figure is either a *garuḍa* grasping the serpents in his talons or a *cepu*, a sort of Bhairava mask with hands on either side of the face, which grasp the serpents. Above the rising vapour are usually found figures of the sun and the moon.

In the centre of the *toraṇa* are found one or more Buddhist figures. One of the commonest motifs found on the *toraṇas* of the *vihāras* is the five transcendent Buddhas, usually with Vairocana in the central position but occasionally with Akṣobhya in the centre. Another common motif is the Buddha, Dharma and Saṅgha. The Buddha is usually Akṣobhya. The Dharma is a four-armed figure of Prajñāpāramitā with two hands joined before her breast in the *bodhyaṅga-* (or *dharmacakra-*) *mudrā* and the other right and left hands holding a garland of beads (*mālā*) and a book, the text of the *Prajñāpāramitā*. Alternatively she may hold the stem of the blue lotus on which rests the *Prajñāpāramitā*. The Saṅgha is represented by a form of Lokeśvara. This is usually Ṣaḍakṣarī-Lokeśvara, a four-handed, seated form with the two main hands joined in the *namaskāra-mudrā* and the other right and left holding a garland of beads and a lotus respectively. This is the Lokeśvara who is a personification of the six-syllabled *mantra* (*ṣaḍakṣarī-mantra*) – *Oṃ Maṇi Padme Hūṃ*. Occasionally the figure is a seated, two-handed Avalokiteśvara holding the lotus in his left hand and showing the boon-granting gesture with his right hand. In several places, mainly in Kathmandu, the Buddha is represented by Dharmadhātuvāgīśvara. This is a figure

with four faces (though often only three are shown) and eight arms. The two main arms show the *dharmacakra-mudrā*. The remaining right hands hold a sword, arrow and a *vajra*; and the left hands hold a book (*Prajñāpāramitā*), a bow and a bell.[10] Another form of this same deity, known as Mahārāga-Mahāmañjuśrāi, is also occasionally found. This form also has four faces and eight hands. The four left hands hold the arrow, noose, book (*Prajñāpāramitā*) and a bell, the right hands hold a bow, an elephant goad, a sword and a *vajra*.[11]

Another popular motif, especially in Kathmandu, is the figure known as Nāmasaṅgīti, a personification of a text often recited in the *vihāras* of Kathmandu. This is a single-faced figure with six pairs of hands. The first pair at the heart show the gesture of fearlessness, the second pair of the crown show the gesture of supplication (*añjali-mudrā*), the third pair usually each hold a staff: one with the double, crossed *vajra* (*viśvavajra*) surmounted by a sword and the other a *khaṭvāṅga*. The fourth pair exhibit the gesture of homage to the departed (*tarpaṇa-mudrā* – the specific *mudrā* of the Nāmasaṅgīti), the fifth pair the gesture of sprinkling nectar (*kṣepaṇa-mudrā*), and the sixth pair rest on the lap in the gesture of meditation (*dhyāna-mudrā*) with the begging bowl resting on them. The figure sits in *vajrāsana* on the lotus seat and wears five ornaments, each representing one of the transcendent Buddhas: the wheel (*cakra*) – Akṣobhya; ear rings (*kuṇḍala*) – Amitābha; the necklace (*kaṇṭhikā*) – Ratnasambhava; bracelets (*rucaka*) – Vairocana, and a cincture (*mekhalā*) – Amoghasiddhi. This deity seems to be a peculiarly Nepalese creation; it is not found in Indian texts.[12]

Every *vihāra* has two names, a Newari name and an official Sanskrit name. The Newari name is often a place name (Dhwākā Bāhā – 'the *bāhā* near the [city] gate'), a direction (Waṃ Bāhā – the 'Eastern Bāhā') or a nickname (Cikaṇ Bahī – 'Mustard Oil Bahī'). Especially in Patan the official Sanskrit name often commemorates the founder or chief donor of the foundation: Śrī Lakṣmīkalyāṇa Varma Samskārita Ratnākara Mahāvihāra (Ratnākara Mahāvihāra founded by Srī Lakṣmīkalyāṇa Varma).[13] The term *mahāvihāra* was used in India for a cluster of *vihāras*, or a large *vihāra* that had many branches, such as existed at Nālandā. In Nepal the term *mahāvihāra* is used without any discernible rationale, often the smallest and most insignificant foundation is called *mahāvihāra*, and some important and ancient foundations are called simply *vihāra*.

The most unique feature of Newar Buddhism is the *bhikṣu-saṅgha* which constitutes a sort of priestly class in Newar society. Four features characterize this saṅgha: (1) All of the *bhikṣus* are married. (2) Entrance into the *bhikṣu-saṅgha* is limited to the sons of initiated *bhikṣus*. (3) Some of the initiated *bhikṣus* belong to a higher sub-class of tantric priests. (4) The *bhikṣus* do not live by alms, but have a secular occupation to support themselves and their families. Traditionally the Śākyas were goldsmiths, and the Vajrācāryas the same, as well as professional priests. Even in the Malla period many Śākyas were carpenters or bricklayers. Today both Śākyas and Vajrācāryas engage in a wide range of occupations.

The general Newari term for the *bhikṣu* is *bare*, derived from *vande* a term of

respect for the Buddhist monk.[14] In inscriptions and other documents from the Malla period they are called *Śākyabhikṣu* or *Śākyavaṃśa* (implying descent from the clan of the Śākyas), and in Patan those who were members of a *bahī* as opposed to a *bāhā* were often called *Brahmacarya-bhikṣu* (though in fact they were married). Today most of the ordinary *bare* use the surname Śākya, while those who are tantric priests use the surname Vajrācārya.

The saṅgha of most monasteries claim descent from a common ancestor, or one of several brothers who are considered to be the founders of the *vihāra*. Few *vihāras* can document their history and origins, but the tradition of descent from a common ancestor is preserved in legends and underlined by the worship of a common lineage deity (*digu/degu-dya*). Every Newar (and in fact every Nepali) lineage has such a deity which is worshipped once a year by the lineage members as a group. Every family of Śākyas or Vajrācāryas has a lineage deity; and, in all but a few cases, all of the members of the saṅgha of a *vihāra* share a common lineage deity. Lineage deities are usually situated outside the town or village, and the shrine consists of a very simple enclosure with one or more aniconic stones. For most people, the lineage deity does not have a name, it is simply *degu dya*. However, in most cases the lineage deities of the members of a *vihāra* have an identity. Frequently the deity is a *caitya*, or one of the transcendent Buddhas, but very often it is identified as a tantric deity such as Cakrasaṃvara, Yogāmbara or Vajrayoginī. The common descent is also underlined by the fact that marriages within a saṅgha are forbidden on grounds of consanguinity. The exceptions prove the rule: in the few cases where marriages are permitted within the saṅgha, it is because the saṅgha is made up of two or more groups of people with different origins.

From the viewpoint of Buddhism the *bhikṣus* initiated in a given *vihāra*, plus their wives and children, constitute the saṅgha. However, in Newar society this has further ramifications. The Valley has always been ruled by Hindu kings and is basically a caste society. The *bare* are in fact a caste, the highest caste among the Buddhist Newars, with the tantric priests considered to be slightly higher than the other *bare*. Their position is the same as that of the brahmans among the Hindu Newars.

From the viewpoint of social custom and social interaction, the members of a *vihāra-saṅgha* constitute a *gūṭhī*. A *gūṭhī* (Sanskrit *goṣṭhi*) is an organization based on caste or kinship, or occasionally on geographical propinquity, which ensures the continued observance of the social and religious customs and ceremonies of the community. *Gūṭhīs* in general are social institutions which determine the rights and obligations of a Newar towards his community. Every Newar is a member of several such *gūṭhīs*, and membership in religious and functional *gūṭhīs* (such as the funeral *gūṭhī* – *si gūṭhī*) is compulsory and inherited. Such membership defines a person's place in society, and to lose membership in such a *gūṭhī* is to lose one's place in society. Each *gūṭhī* originally had an endowment, some agricultural land, from which the members obtained an annual income to finance the activities of the *gūṭhī*. Whatever

money was left over from the specific activities of the *gūṭhī* was used for an annual feast.

Each *gūṭhī* is well-organized and has strict rules and conditions for membership and the performance of prescribed functions. The most senior member of the *gūṭhī* is called *thāypa* or *thakālī*, and he acts as the chairman of the *gūṭhī* and of the board of elders who oversee its functioning. Their main function is to maintain the discipline of the members. The *gūṭhī* passes judgment in cases of dispute among members and takes action against those who violate its rules. A majority vote can levy punishments for infractions or even expel a member. Infractions would include bad manners, irregularity in attendance, failure to fulfil one's assigned role in the *gūṭhī*, breach of caste regulations. Every *gūṭhī* has an annual meeting when business is conducted and a feast is held. In addition to the *thāypa* there is also a *gūṭhī* administrator. The position of administrator is rotated through the membership, and it is the duty of the current administrator to make arrangements for the annual meeting and feast, and to finance the feast if there is insufficient revenue from the *gūṭhī* endowment.

In the case of the *vihāras*, the structure of the *gūṭhī* has been grafted on to the structure of a Buddhist monastic community. The members of the *gūṭhī* are the initiated *bhikṣu-saṅgha*, the elders are the *sthavira* and the senior-most elder, the *mahā-sthavira*. The functions which they oversee are the daily, monthly and annual Buddhist observances in the *vihāra*, initiations into the *bhikṣu-saṅgha* and the discipline of the saṅgha, which in this case consists in seeing that prescribed rituals are performed in turn by the members and that social or caste regulations are observed.

Every Buddhist monastic community in India had some common religious exercises each day – brief and simple in Theravāda monasteries, much more elaborate in Mahāyāna and tantric foundations. One of the main features of this worship was, and still is, *Buddha-pūjā – the worship of the image of the Buddha enshrined in a monastery.*[15] The *vihāras* of the Valley also have a daily *pūjā* which is at least a worship of the main image enshrined in the *vihāra*, the *kwāpā-dya*. It seems that originally the *vihāras* had a full schedule of rituals throughout the day. This is no longer true except at a very few places like Jana Bāhā in Kathmandu and Kwā Bāhā in Patan.[16] All have a ceremony in the morning (shortly after sunrise, the time depending on the time of the year). This is the official, prescribed worship, the *nitya-pūjā*, and consists primarily in the offering of the *pañcopacāra-pūjā* and the recitation of hymns. The *pañcopacāra-pūjā* is a five-fold offering consisting of flowers, incense, light, scent and food (*puṣpa, dhūpa, dīpa, gandha, naivedya*). Most also have an evening service, the main part of which is the offering of a light to the deity, the *ārati-pūjā*.

The daily rituals are performed by the initiated members of the saṅgha in turn. The attendant on duty is called the *dya-pālā* or *dya-pā*, the guardian of the deity. In most *vihāras*, rotation is through the entire roster of the initiated from eldest to youngest. However, in a number of the *vihāras* the rotation is by

household or lineage. In some places today the rituals are always performed by one man. Service in the shrine of the *kwāpā-dya* is one of the main rights and duties which is conferred on the members of the saṅgha by their initiation, and it is a privilege indeed as no one but the initiated members of the saṅgha may actually enter the shrine. Until very recent times every member of the saṅgha faithfully took his turn as *dya-pālā*. Today many find this inconvenient and get another member of the saṅgha who has the time to take their turn. In some *vihāras* failure to take one's turn reduces one to the status of a sort of fringe member and disqualifies one from serving as an elder of the saṅgha. In other places it seems to make no difference. The term of service varies, but is most frequently one lunar month or one lunar fortnight. Originally the attendant had to spend the entire period of his service in the shrine at the *vihāra* and to follow the monastic rules of a monk for that period. This is seldom the case today. In most *vihāras* the *dya-pālā* comes in the morning and evening, opens the shrine, performs the prescribed rituals and returns immediately to his home or his quarters in the *vihāra*. In a few of the principal institutions he remains on duty throughout the day, and members of the saṅgha as well as lay people come for the prescribed rituals or to perform their own private devotions.

Certain days of the month are sacred to the Buddhists, especially the full moon day and the eighth day of the bright half of the month, which is sacred to Avalokiteśvara. At many of the *vihāras* one can see large groups of people (mostly women) who come to perform a fast and ritual in honour of Amoghapāśa-Lokeśvara (the *aṣṭamī-vrata*) on this day.

Theoretically every *vihāra* (as also every *caitya* and every other Newar shrine, Buddhist or Hindu) has an annual festival which commemorates the founding of the *vihāra* and is called *busā-dan̄*, the 'birthday'. Traditionally this has been the one day in the year when the entire saṅgha of a *vihāra* gathered for religious exercises and a feast. From the viewpoint of the structure of Newar society, this is the annual meeting and feast of the *vihāra gūṭhī*. In Patan the custom is almost universally observed; in Kathmandu, as families have moved away from their old homes and as income from the endowments has diminished, the custom has begun to die out.

Another annual observance of the entire Buddhist community is what is known as *Gun̄lā dharma*. *Gun̄lā* is the name of one of the Newar months, occurring usually from mid-July to mid-August (from the beginning of the bright half of *Sravan* to the end of the dark half of *Bhādra* on the national calendar), and the whole month is sacred to the Buddhists. This custom is perhaps an echo of the ancient monastic custom of the 'rainy season retreat'. Throughout the month there are special observances at the *vihāras* and at the homes of Buddhists. Each day is supposed to begin with fasting; streams of people can be seen each morning going to Svayambhū, the large *stūpa* outside of the city of Kathmandu, and women and girls fashion countless numbers of clay *caityas* which are thrown into the river at the end of the month. At the *vihāra*, it was the custom to recite texts during this month, especially the text of the *Prajñāpāramitā*, but this

custom has largely died out. Following are three customs which are still rather generally observed during this 'month.

First is the *pañcadāna*, the giving of five offerings. Originally this was the offering of gifts of food to the monks and the present custom is an adaptation of this. On the appointed day, which differs in each of the cities, the Buddhist lay people prepare a sort of altar at their home adorned with Buddhist images. In front of the altar they place baskets with four kinds of grain and salt. Throughout the day *bare* (Śākyas and Vajrācāryas) of the city come and collect their share of offerings. Many of the wealthier Śākyas and Vajrācāryas no longer make the rounds, but there is still a continuous procession of *bare* throughout the day. In Bhaktapur the ceremony is enhanced by a procession of the five main Dīpaṅkara images of the city. These proceed to a central place where the faithful from the area place their offerings, and the *bare* of that neighbourhood come to receive them. After some time the procession moves on to the next neighbourhood and so on throughout the day. The whole custom is intimately connected with Dīpaṅkara, and in each of the three cities the main image put out on this day is of him. In Patan people say that the custom originated when Dīpaṅkara Buddha himself came to Patan to seek alms and took the alms offered by a poor, old woman of Guita Tole in preference to the rich offerings of the king. A statue of this woman is put out each year on the day of *pañcadāna*. Dīpaṅkara is one of the earlier Buddhas said to have come before Śākyamuni, and who is supposed to have predicted his coming. His cult attained a great popularity in Malla Nepal, and there are images of him at almost every *vihāra*. The images are donated by individuals who have the image consecrated and then usually install it in one of the *vihāras*. All of these images are brought out in procession at the time of the *samyak* ceremony, which is held every five years at Kwā Bāhā in Patan and every twelve years at Bhuikhel below Sṿayambhū in Kathmandu. The ceremony is a sort of general *pañcadāna* to which are invited the saṅghas of all the *vihāras* in the city. In Malla times it was the custom for wealthy traders to sponsor such a *samyak* ceremony when they returned prosperous from a long trading expedition to Tibet.

The second observance is what is known as *bahī-dya-boyegu*, the "showing of the gods in the *bahīs*". Traditionally this lasted for ten days, and on the first day the members of the *vihāra* and the lay people used to bring whatever images, Buddhist relics, paintings or books they had to put on display for ten days. Perhaps the custom began first at the *bahīs* where they have large open halls suited for such a display. Now the custom is fast dying out. Most *vihāras* no longer put anything out for display, and those which do have a rather meagre display for only a day or two. Many reasons are given for this, the most common being fear of theft; but the fact is that a very large number of these ancient relics have already 'disappeared'.

Patan has an observance that is not found in the other cities, the *matayā* or 'festival of lights'. This occurs on the second day of the dark half of the month of *Guñlā*; and on this day the people of Patan, carrying lighted tapers, candles or

torches, go in groups to visit all of the *caityas* and *bāhās* of the city of Patan. Given the large number of *bāhās* in Patan, to complete the circuit of all of them is a day-long endurance test. This occurs on the day after *gāijātrā*, a Hindu festival commemorating those who have died within the past year; and the *matayā* is considered to be the Buddhist equivalent. This festival is not observed in either Kathmandu or Bhaktapur. There is, however, a similar observance known simply as *bāhā-pūjā* which can be performed by those who wish at any time of the year and is not a commemoration of the dead. It consists in a visit to each of the *bāhās* in the city, and substantial offerings are made by the participants at each site. The ritual is an expensive one and seldom performed again.

Another annual observance at the *vihāras* is what is known as *disā-pūjā*, 'directional worship'. Performed twice a year in Pauṣ and Jyeṣṭha (December and June), this ritual marks the solstice, the end of the sun's journey north or south, and at the level of popular folklore is said to stop the sun's progress and turn it back.

Harkening back to the monastic practice of having a head of the monastic saṅgha (the *mahā-sthavira*) and the custom that ordinations cannot be performed without the presence of the monastic community, each *vihāra* has a number of elders who theoretically oversee the life of the saṅgha and whose presence is required for valid ordinations. In the days when the life of the saṅgha was more vigorous and touched on the daily life of the people more closely, the governing committee was busy and had clearly defined duties. At present their duties are limited to making arrangements for daily services in the shrine, making arrangements for the annual religious observances and feasts, seeing to a few routine business matters like making repairs to the *vihāra* shrine, and settling alleged violations of *vihāra* customs and caste regulations. In many *vihāras* today the elders are no more than honorary seniors who have no clearly defined functions other than to be present at ordinations and to sit in the place of honour at feasts. Most *vihāras* have five or ten elders, some have twenty or twelve, and many of the *bahīs* have only one. Ordinarily the elders hold office on the basis of strict seniority of initiation and, in a *vihāra-saṅgha* that is made up of both Śākyas and Vajrācāryas, irrespective of whether one is a Śākya or Vajrācārya, with one exception. The *cakreśvara*, the one who has to perform the tantric rituals in the secret tantric shrine, must be a Vajrācārya if there are Vajrācāryas in the saṅgha. The *cakreśvara* is always one of the elders, so there must be at least one Vajrācārya elder.

As noted above membership in the *vihāra-saṅgha* is limited to the sons of the initiated members of a given *vihāra*. The sons must be born of a mother of equal caste; if the mother is of a lower caste the son is ineligible. The saṅgha of a *vihāra* is in effect a patrilineal descent group. The initiation is known as the *bare-chuyegu* (the 'making of a *bare*') and is essentially the *pravrajyā*, or first initiation of a *bhikṣu*.

The age for initiation is about ten years, in any case before puberty. However, this may vary considerably. Initiation ceremonies are lengthy and expensive;

hence, especially in the smaller institutions, initiations are held at irregular intervals whenever there are enough candidates to share the expenses. About a week before the actual initiation the candidates come to the *vihāra* and, after presenting five betel nuts, *pān*, flowers, sandalwood paste, fragrant incense and a lamp to the senior-most member of the *saṅgha*, they formally request the *pravrajyā* initiation from him. On the day before the initiation itself the candidates come again to their *vihāra*, and in a ceremony that lasts most of the afternoon, they are taught to perform the *gurumaṇḍala* rite, a basic rite in honour of Vajrasattva that is performed before every Vajrayāna ritual and which they will have to perform on the next day. At the conclusion of the ceremony the head of the saṅgha ties a tuft of hair at the crown of each candidate's head with a piece of cloth containing a particle of gold, or with a gold ring. This is in preparation for the shaving of the head on the following day: the day of the *pravrajyā*. The term *cūḍākarma* (or *karaṇa*) ('making of the top knot') is often popularly used for this rite and is found in some of the ritual texts, but it properly applies only to the first part of the ceremony. The terms *upanayana* and *vratabandha* are also popularly used, even by the *bare* themselves, but they are not found in the ritual texts and are obviously used in analogy to the Hindu initiation rite.

First, the candidates perform the *guru-maṇḍala* rite as learned on the previous day. The rubrics then specify that a short explanation be given to the candidates of the meaning of the *pravrajyā* rite, after which they take refuge in the Buddha, Dharma and Saṅgha. Then, the five rules of discipline are read to the candidates. At the conclusion of this the candidates again request initiation, this time from the officiating Vajrācārya priest. Next, the candidates, who sit in a line according to age, are led away from the area of the rituals to a barber seated at the edge of the *vihāra* courtyard for the *cūḍā-karma*. The barber shaves the head of each boy, leaving a top knot (*cūḍā*), as is done by caste Hindus. Then the boy is presented with a loin cloth. The giving of the loin cloth (*mekhalābandhana* in Sanskrit, *kayata-pūjā* in Newari) and the shaving of the head apart from the top knot is the initiation rite for all of the Newar castes exclusive of the *bare*. Thus the *bare* is first initiated as a householder. The point is underlined in the ritual texts themselves, for at this point the priest or his assistant is told to address the candidates: "As a result of the rites which have been performed you are now householders. It is not too late to change your mind. Do you really want to be *bhikṣus*, and why?"[17] The candidates respond that indeed they do want to be *bhikṣus* and again request the *pravrajya* initiation.

This is followed by the *pravrajyā* itself. The candidates are led in turn to a spot directly in front of the shrine of the *vihāra*. There the senior-most member of the saṅgha cuts off the top knot and the loin cloth. Then the five eldest members of the saṅgha and the officiating priest pour sacred water over the candidate's head. The cutting of the top knot and shedding of the loin cloth symbolize the renunciation of the status of householder and the rejection of caste status by the *bhikṣu*.

Following the *pravrajyā* proper, the candidates are invested with the robe of a

bhikṣu, a red or yellow robe, to which is added two silver bracelets, a pair of earrings, and a silver necklace. The candidates are then presented with the *bhikṣu's* begging bowl, a staff and a ritual umbrella. The presiding priest then gives each of them a new name saying, "You are now a *bhikṣu*; you must not hanker after the life of a householder, a home, or such things. You must lay aside your household name. I will give you a new name, the name of a *bhikṣu*."[18] Then the candidates perform the *pūjā* of the *maṇḍalas* of the Three jewels: the *Buddha-maṇḍala*, the *Dharma-maṇḍala* and the *Saṅgha-maṇḍala*. They then listen to the reading of the ten rules of discipline of the *bhikṣu*. The ritual texts then give a prayer to be recited at the conclusion of the investiture: "May all those who have undergone this rite of *pravrajyā* in the presence of the Buddha, ever be victorious by the favour of the gods and the power of fire, water, sky and the vital spirit, as long as Mt. Meru stands, as long as the Ganges flows, as long as the earth, the sun and the moon remain constant."[19]

At the conclusion of the investiture each of the candidates in turn is handed a golden *kalaśa* and is led carrying it into the shrine of the *vihāra*. As an initiated member of the saṅgha he has the right to enter this shrine and the duty to serve as an attendant of the Buddha.

The *bhikṣu* must beg his food daily and the next rite is a ceremonial offering of alms to the new *bhikṣus*. A low basket is placed in front of each of the *bhikṣus* and a procession of people comes along to offer uncooked rice and coins to them. The first to offer alms to each must be the boy's mother's brother, who offers him not only rice, but also a tray containing a new set of clothes which he will don four days later. Finally the new *bhikṣus* are taken out of the *vihāra* in procession round the neighbourhood. In Kathmandu this procession always goes to Hanumān Dhokā, the old royal palace, where the *bhikṣus* present betel nuts to the throne of the king.

The boys are now *bhikṣus*, and for four days they must live the life of Buddhist monks, though they continue to live at home whether the family has quarters inside of the *vihāra* or outside. They have to observe the regulations of diet of the monk (only one meatless meal a day, taken before noon), avoid contact with anything unclean, and keep the ten rules of discipline. They have to go out each morning to beg their food, and for this they must go to the houses of their mother's brothers and their father's sisters. Beyond this they ordinarily go to the houses of any other relatives who call them, usually three or four houses a day.

Four days after the *pravrajyā* rites the young *bhikṣus* return to the *vihāra* for the ceremony of "laying aside the monk's robe" (*civara kote vidhi*). The rite is also called *vratamokṣaṇa* (release from the vows). For this ceremony the boys are taken up into the secret tantric shrine of the *vihāra* there they make the following petition to the officiating priest, "*O guru, O upādhyāya*, we find that it is too difficult to spend our whole life like this as *śramaṇas*." The priest responds, 'If you find it too difficult to live as *śramaṇas* then live as householders. If you want heaven (*svarga*) you can obtain it by being a householder, but do not indulge in violence, do not tell lies, do not covet another's wife. If you

avoid these things you will obtain heaven."[20] They then lay aside their monk's robes and put on the new set of clothes given them by their mother's brother on the day of the *pravrajyā*. Finally they are given a *mantra* of Heruka Cakrasaṃvara.[21]

According to the tradition of the Newars, the *bare* do not cease to be *bhikṣus* by the above rite, but pass from the state of celibate *bhikṣus* to that of householder *bhikṣus*, a fact underlined by the name *bhikṣu* or *śākyabhikṣu* used to refer to them down the ages. Allen records of the ceremonies in Patan, that after their completion, the boy is taken home, where he is introduced to some elementary Vajrayāna rituals by the family Vajrācārya priest, after which the priest addresses him along the following lines: "You have gone through *Śrāvakayāna* and now come to Mahāyāna, the greatest of the Buddhist *yānas*. You have participated in some Vajrayāna rituals and after going through some higher ordinations you will know what Chakrasambar is."[22] From the viewpoint of Vajrayāna Buddhism, the initiated passes through successively higher forms of Buddhism. Starting as a totally uninitiated boy, he is first initiated as a householder (*upāsaka*). Then he becomes a Hīnayāna monk through the *pravrajyā*. With the "laying aside of the robes" he embraces the Mahāyāna state and, if he is a Vajrācārya, he will be further initiated into the mysteries of the Vajrayāna -- the adamantine way: the highest and most powerful of the Buddhist ways of attaining enlightment.

Entrance into the ranks of the Vajrācāryas is limited by birth; only the sons of Vajrācāryas may be initiated. The Vajrācārya initiation, known in Newari as the *ācā-luyegu* (the 'making of an *ācārya*') and in Sanskrit as the *pañcābhiṣeka* (the 'five consecrations') is always given after the *bare-chuyegu*, in Kathmandu usually the day after the "laying aside of the robes", and in Patan at a later date.

The initiation consists of five tantric consecrations: the *kalaśābhiṣeka* (water flask consecration), *mukuṭābhiṣeka* (crown consecration), *vajrābhiṣeka* (*vajra*, or diamond, consecration), *ghaṇṭābhiṣeka* (bell consecration), and *guhyābhiṣeka* (secret consecration). The *kalaśa*, ritual crown, *vajra* and bell are the implements which the Vajrācārya uses for his performance of the ritual. The secret consecration was originally the consecration of the tantric *yogin* with his consort and symbolizes the union of *prajñā* and *upāya* (wisdom and means), the female and male principles of Vajrayāna philosophy. At present the candidates are presented with a flower garland and shown a picture of Heruka Cakrasaṃvara in union with his consort Vajravārāhī. Following these consecrations, the candidates are given a different *mantra* of Heruka Cakrasaṃvara from the one they were given before. They are then enjoined to secrecy about the details of these initiation rites. In practice the secrecy is taken to refer to the *mantra* itself; this is always passed from *guru* to disciple and never divulged or written down even in the ritual texts.

Having taken these consecrations, the Vajrācārya is empowered to perform the *homa* sacrifice, an essential part of all major rituals, and to confer consecrations. He is further empowered to perform the secret tantric rites in the *āgam* of

the *bāhā*, or in his own home if he has such a shrine. He is entitled to have *jajamānas* – client families – for whom he acts as priest and from whom he receives a stipend for his services. In each *bāhā* where there are Vajrācāryas, there is an *acārya-gūṭhī* composed of all the Vajrācārya members of the saṅgha, and in Kathmandu there is an overall organization of all the Vajrācāryas of the city known simply as the *Ācārya-Gūṭhi*. This *Ācārya-Guthi* was responsible for standardizing ritual and providing ritual texts for its members. For this reason there is greater uniformity in the performance of ritual in Kathmandu than in Patan or Bhaktapur; and the Vajrācāryas of Kathmandu are recognized by their confrères in Patan and Bhaktapur as experts in the performance of the ritual. The *Ācārya-Gūṭhī* also strictly controlled the relationship between the Vajrācāryas and their clients. Client families were passed on from father to son as a right consequent upon ordination. The clients had no say whatsoever in the selection of their priests. However, as a result of a dispute some years ago which lasted nearly thirty years, the *Ācārya-Gūṭhī* lost its hold both over its priests and over its clients. Now people feel free to call any Vajrācārya if they are disatisfied with their priest.[23]

From a religious and social point of view, the most vital service provided to the Buddhist community by the *bare* is the priestly service of the Vajrācāryas. They are needed for caste initiations, marriages, worship of the lineage deity, and all principal *pūjās*, whether performed in the home or at a *bāhā*. Hence the dominant place of the Vajrācārya and of the *Ācārya-Gūṭhī* in Kathmandu, whose eighteen *bāhās* are still recognized as the principal *bāhās* of Kathmandu.

There are today some 363 Buddhist *vihāras* still extant in the Valley, but they are not all of equal status. Among the *bāhās* there are two broad categories called in Newari *mū-bāhā* and *kacā-bāhā*; that is, main *vihāras* (Sanskrit *mūla*) and branch *vihāra* (Sanskrit *śākha*). A main *vihāra* is one in which *bare-chuyegu* initiations are rightfully performed. The branch *vihāras* are just what the name indicates: branches of the main institutions founded when the pace in the original *vihāra* would no longer accommodate the ever-expanding saṅgha, or when a lay donor was moved to found a *vihāra* and donate it to one lineage of an existing *vihāra-saṅgha*. Originally it seems that new monasteries were founded with independent saṅghas, but there came a time when the number of official monasteries became fixed and new foundations were considered to be branches of the original monastery. In such a case the members of a branch are still considered to be members of the main monastery and must receive their initiation there, take their turn in the shrine and serve as elders of the saṅgha. At the same time they have similar obligations towards their branch monastery.

Thus in Patan there are eighteen main *bāhās*, called 'The Fifteen Bāhās'.[24] In addition there are over 130 *bāhās* which are branches of these main monasteries.[25] In Kathmandu there are eighteen *bāhās* belonging to the *Ācārya-Gūṭhī*, all of which have Vajrācārya members and several have only Vajrācārya. To this day they are considered to be the most important *bāhās* of Kathmandu,

despite the fact that there are ten other main *bāhās* of Śākyas where *bare-chuyegu* initiations are performed. Both the main *bāhās* of the *Ācārya-Gūṭhī* and the ten Śākya *bāhās* also have branches. In Bhaktapur there are only nine main *bāhās*, some Śākya and some mixed. All of the extant Bhaktapur *bāhās* are main *bāhās*.

The *bahīs* form a separate class of monastery, but today the difference between the two has been lost for all practical purposes. We have seen above certain architectural differences between the two types. Certain other superficial differences are obvious. Most of the *bahīs* are in a general state of disrepair in contrast to the *bāhās*, especially the main *bāhās* of Patan, which have been kept up and are periodically renovated. The saṅghas of the *bahīs* are small and continually decreasing so that the membership of the *bahī*-saṅghas accounts for only 5.4% of the total *bare* in the Valley. Several institutions which were functioning fifty years ago are now empty and falling into ruins. Because of their small numbers, *bahīs*, except for Cikaṅ Bahī in Patan, usually do not have branches. In general the members of the *bahīs* are financially less well off than the members of the *bāhās*. The organization of the saṅgha of a *bahī* is different from that of a *bāhā*. In Patan there are two groups of *bahīs*, one comprising ten *bahīs* and the other fifteen. In Kathmandu there are sixteen *bahīs*. Though initiations are (or were until recent times) performed in all of these *vihāras*, each of these three groups of *bahīs* had one overall saṅgha (*sarva-saṅgha*) with five elders for each of the two groups of Patan and a group of sixteen elders in Kathmandu, one from each *bahī*. This system is somewhat modified now, as the two groups in Patan have broken up in recent times, and several of the *bahī-saṅghas* in Kathmandu have died out entirely.[26] In Patan, until recent times, the members of a *bahī* were called *brahmacarya-bhikṣu* rather than *śākya-bhikṣu* or *śākya-vaṃśa*. Though the term is still known, most of these people today prefer simply Śākya.

All of these are rather superficial differences, and if one asks *bare* today the difference between *bāhā* and *bahī*, they are hard pressed to give a meaningful answer. Members of the *bāhās* will often say that the *bahīs* were later foundations set up for people of mixed or lower castes. Historical evidence contradicts this contention. A number of the *bahīs* have definitely been in existence for six hundred years or more. I Bahī and its associates in Patan are probably about nine hundred years old, Guita Bahī in Patan existed in 1024 AD, Thaṃ Bahī in Kathmandu certainly existed in 1041 AD and Cā Bahī in Kathmandu certainly goes back to Licchavi times, though the present saṅgha seems to be later. The members of I Bahī claim brahman descent, and though this cannot be proven with documentary evidence, some of their still current customs confirm this. It is true that the members of the *bahīsaṅghas* were, until recent times, looked upon as somehow slightly lower than members of a *bāhā*. Members of a *bāhā* would usually not give their daughters in marriage to a *bahī* nor would they take wives from them. This prejudice has almost disappeared today. Others will say that the organization of the *bahī-saṅgha* is less structured and that the *bahī* people have

fewer rituals to perform. To an extent this is true, but the statement is made against the background of a theory which says that the more rules one has to follow and rituals one has to perform the higher one's religious status. Today in fact there is little difference, and one has to look at the history of the two institutions to find the original difference.

The position of the Śākyas and Vajrācāryas in Newar Buddhist society is clear. They are the *bhikṣu-saṅgha*, and the Vajrācāryas among them are the priests of the entire Buddhist community. Their religious traditions and their rituals are all clearly tantric Buddhist, and if asked they will identify themselves as Buddhists. The question of the lay Buddhists – who they are and what percentage of the Newar population they constitute – is one which has vexed every commentator.[27] The Newar trading class of Kathmandu (the *Udāya*), most of the *Mānandhars* and the *Citrakārs* are clearly and consciously Buddhist. Beyond this there are few clear distinctions. Most commentators have settled on the criterion of the family priest – if a family, or a caste, uses Vajrācārya priests for their life-cycle rites and family rituals they are classed as Buddhist, if they use brahmans or tantric Hindu priests they are classed as Hindu.

I have used this criterion myself, but have increasing doubts about its usefulness. The farmer class among the Newars, the *Jyāpūs*, make up some forty-five percent of the total Newar population. They constitute a large percentage of the population of the three cities, and the bulk of the population in the villages which dot the plain of the Valley. There are no *bare* in most of these villages, so the people call a Vajrācārya priest from Patan, Kathmandu or Bhaktapur when they need one. Until recent times nearly 100% of the *Jyāpūs* used Vajrācārya priests. These were the priests assigned to them in days gone by, and they continued to call them for the performance of life-cycle rites or death ceremonies, and to preside over the annual festival of the principal deities of their villages or area of the city. The principal deity in these villages and in the *Jyāpū* sections of the cities, is usually a tantric Hindu deity – Harisiddhi, Bhagavatī, Nāsa Dya (the Dancing Śiva) etc. In recent times many of the *Jyāpū* families, especially in more remote places like Sankhu and Dhulikhel and in the city of Bhaktapur, have begun to call brahman priests (usually non-Newar brahmans) to perform their life-cycle rites and the commemoration of the dead. When questioned as to the reason for this, they respond that these brahmans offer their services cheaper, it is more convenient to call them, or it is more politic to have brahman priests in a Hindu kingdom.[28] When they switch priests the only thing that changes in their religious culture is the priest – they continue to worship the same deities with the same rituals, and understand their life-cycle rites and ceremonies for the dead in exactly the same way.

What we seem to have is a substratum of religious rites and customs that were originally purely animistic but which have been influenced by outside forces of a higher tradition – tantric Hinduism which has resulted in Hindu names for the deities, stories from the *Purāṇas* to explain their background, and modes of worship that are tantric and Hindu. Tantric Buddhism contributed the

priests, and this probably came about because of the availability of the Vajrācāryas. In Malla Nepal there were far more Vajrācāryas than brahmans, especially in Patan and Kathmandu. Even today in Bhaktapur, the most Hindu of the three cities, there are only 26 households of Newar brahmans as opposed to 209 houses of *bare*, about half of whom are Vajrācāryas.[29] It is clear that in Malla Nepal there were barely enough brahmans to serve the needs of the court and the aristocracy who were caste Hindus. In fact, the use of brahman priests may well have provided a convenient distinction between the rulers and the ruled. From the viewpoint of the people (i.e., the *Jyāpūs*), the Vajrācāryas were accepted and respected above all because they possessed power – power to ward off evil, to subdue malevolent deities, to coerce supernatural forces and to bend them to the use of the villagers.[30] Even to this day people in the Valley, even non-Newars, will say that the most powerful *jhānkrī* is the Vajrācārya.[31] If then one uses the criterion of the family priest to classify people as Hindu or Buddhist, what information does this convey? Very little indeed. What is needed is a fresh anthropological analysis of the religious customs of these people from a different viewpoint.

What are the historical antecedents that led to the unique features of Newar Buddhism today? At the outset it must be said that one cannot give a definite answer to this question at the present state of our knowledge. In what follows I will attempt to draw together what few threads we have from the medieval period, and try to form some tentative hypotheses.

Buddhist stories and legends give a hoary antiquity to Buddhism in the Valley, tracing human habitation to a visit of Mañjuśrī, who drained the lake that once filled the Valley. Legends speak of visits to the Valley by the legendary. Buddhas who preceded the historical Buddha: Kāśyapa Buddha, Krakucchanda, Kanakamuṇi, Dīpaṅkara; and some of the *vihāras* are said to have been founded by these early Buddhas. Legend speaks of a visit to the Valley by the Emperor Aśoka. The four *stūpas* at the cardinal points of the city of Patan are attributed to him, many ancient *caityas* in Kathmandu are attributed to him, and he is said to have married off a daughter to a *kṣatriya* of Nepal. In their old age she and her husband founded a *vihāra*, the present Cā Bahī, which was named after her. The Sanskrit name of this *vihāra* is often given as Cārumati Vihāra.[32]

Given the proximity of the Valley of Nepal to Lumbini and Kapilavastu and to the areas of North Bihar where Buddhism spread rapidly even during the time of the Buddha, it is quite possible that the Dharma found its way to the Valley during the lifetime of the Buddha himself. It is not *a priori* impossible that the Emperor Aśoka visited the Valley, but there is no contemporary evidence of such a visit either from Nepal or from Buddhist sources in India. Unlike India, where the ancient Buddhist sites are abandoned ruins, the ancient sites in Nepal are still active shrines. Hence archeological investigation of sites such as the four *stūpas* of Patan is impossible without offending the religious sensibilities of the people.

The first contemporary evidence of the presence of Buddhism in the Valley comes from the corpus of Licchavi inscriptions ranging from 464 to about 880 AD and comprising nearly 200 inscriptions, some of them mere fragments.[33] Vṛṣadeva, a king of the Licchavi period who precedes the time of the earliest inscriptions, is said by the inscriptions and by the chronicles to have been a Buddhist and to have founded a monastery at the famous Svayambhūnāth Mahācaitya.[34] The inscriptions mention 14 *vihāras*, and the *Gopālarājavaṁśāvalī*, the earliest and most reliable of the Nepalese chronicles, mentions six *vihāras* from this period.[35] Though all of the kings, except possibly Vṛṣadeva, seem to have been clearly Hindu, some of the monasteries were founded by royal patronage or royal grants: Śrīmāna Vihāra built by Mānadeva and Rāja Vihāra built by another king, possibly Aṃśuvarmā. An inscription from the time of Aṁśuvarmā mentions religious taxes and the institutions which the collected revenue support. Among these institutions (mostly Hindu shrines) are several *vihāras*.[36] Two inscriptions, both dated Samvat 103 (678–9 AD), from the time of Narendradeva, grant large tracts of land to *vihāras* for their support. With the grant of land and its income went certain other rights. The saṅgha was entrusted with authority to collect the taxes for their own use and to function as civil authorities, settling disputes among the people and issuing punishment for crimes committed by people within their territory.[37] Even at this early date one sees the saṅgha very much involved in secular business.

From the inscriptions themselves we know nothing about the internal operation of the *vihāra*, the makeup of the saṅgha, or the life-style of the *bhikṣus*. We know nothing about the sect or sects the *bhikṣus* of a given *vihāra* belonged to, except for a fragmentary reference at Sankhu to the *mahāsāṅghika-bhikṣu-saṅgha*.[38] There are a number of references to the *bhikṣu-* or *bhikṣuṇī-saṅgha* and one reference to a *śākya-bhikṣu*.[39] From a number of references in inscriptions to Avalokiteśvara and images of him from the period which have survived, we know that Mahāyāna Buddhism flourished. The Chinese pilgrim Hiuen-tsang noted that there were both heretics (i.e. Hindus) and true believers (Buddhists) in Nepal. The temples of the gods and the monasteries existed side by side and there were a total of about 2,000 monks who studied both the Mahāyāna and Hīnayāna.[40] It seems that Vajrayāna Buddhism was known, but certainly had not attained the dominance it later enjoyed.[41] This is really the sum of our knowledge of Buddhism during this period. Of the extant *vihāras*, only one can be traced with any degree of certainty to the Licchavi period: Guṃ Bāhā at Sankhu, the Guṃ Vihāra of the inscriptions. The Svayambhū Mahācaitya of course still exists, but the *vihāra* has long disappeared.[42]

The next period of Nepalese history is the so-called Ṭhākurī period which extends from about 750 AD (or 879 AD if one counts from the beginning of the Nepal ęra) until the first of the Malla kings in 1200 AD.[43] It is a period of which our knowledge is limited. Few inscriptions have survived and what little we know of even the political history of the period comes mostly from colophons on manuscripts, largely Buddhist, which mention the name of the reigning king

and occasionally a few other bits of information. From the large number of Buddhist manuscripts which were copied during this period it is evident that Buddhism flourished. Contemporary records mention eleven of the still extant *vihāras* and another thirty-one *vihāras* which are unknown today.[44] The Buddhist manuscripts include standard Mahāyāna texts such as the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā-prajñāpāramitā* and the *Kāraṇḍavyūha*, collections of Buddhist stories such as the *avadāna-kathās*, plus a large number of tantras and tantric ritual texts, the most popular of which was the *Pañcarakṣā*. All of the manuscripts are in Sanskrit; there is not a single Pāli text from this period.

One of the most important sources of information on the Buddhism of this period is a collection of 140 palm-leaf land deeds found a few years ago at Ukū Bāhā in Patan. The earliest of these is dated Nepal Samvat 103 (982–3 AD) and they extend down to the early part of the Malla period. Nearly all of them deal with land transactions involving *vihāras* and the residents of *vihāras*. Some thirty-seven of these have been published and the entire corpus is currenty being editied.[45] Those which have been published give the names of a number of the *vihāras* of Patan, most of which are unknown today. The residents of the *vihāras* are usually referred to as *śākya-bhikṣu* or simply *bhikṣu*; a few are identified as Vajrācārya. What strikes one immediately in these documents is the large number of *śākya-bhikṣus* and *bhikṣus* who are buying and selling land in their own name. There are only a few instances of transactions in the name of a saṅgha or a *vihāra*. This would seem to indicate a high degree of secularization. An analysis of the entire corpus of these documents will perhaps shed more light on this question.

Another source of information on this period is the Tibetan records, for it was precisely at this time that the Dharma was being revived in Tibet and many Tibetans were coming to Nepal and India to study and receive initiations. Records such as the *Blue Annals* attest to the presence in the Valley of a number of pandits and tantric adepts under whom the Tibetans studied. Many of these were Indian, but some were definitely Nepalese, indicating that there were at least some of the residents of the *vihāras* who were scholars and yogic adepts. These included such famous Indian scholars and *siddhas* as Vāgīśvarakīrti, Vibhūticandra, Buddhaśrī, Ratnarakṣita, Śāntarakṣita, Vasubandhu. Atiśa or Dīpaṅkara Śrījñāna as he was known in India, spent a year in Nepal in 1041–42 AD and built a temple or shrine at Taṃ Vihāra (the present Thaṃ Bahī in Kathmandu). He noted that the discipline and the manner of conducting the study of the doctine at this *vihāra* was excellent.[46] Early in the thirteenth century the Tibetan Dharmasvamin spent several years in Nepal staying at the *vihāra* at Svayambhū where he studied under Ratnarakṣita and Mahāpaṇḍita Ravindradeva. He too mentions Taṃ Vihāra and notes that from the time of Atiśa until the present the religious rites were properly observed in this monastery.[47] Among the Nepalese scholars mentioned are Anutapagupta and Vairocana (disciples of Atiśa) [*Blue Annals* p. 850], Nayaśrī [p. 1053], Bandepa, also known as Paindapatika [p. 402], Buddhaśrī [Taranātha p. 317], Phammthin-pa and his four

brothers [*Blue Annals* p. 380ff].[48] The last of the famous Indian pandits came in the fifteenth century and was a Bengali known as Vanaratna and called by the Tibetans 'The Last Great Pandit.' He spent several years in Nepal, went to Tibet and then later returned to Nepal, where he retired to a monastery which still exists, Gopicandra Mahāvihāra (Pintu Bahī). What is strange about all of these scholars and *siddhas* mentioned by the Tibetans is that the Newar Buddhist tradition has retained no memory of any of them. The case of Vanaratna is the most striking, as a painting of this man was made the year after his death in 1468. This painting was preserved at Pintu Bahī until 1862 when a copy was made because the original had become faded. Both paintings have identical inscriptions in Newari explaining who the man was, and in the case of the second painting, why the new copy was made. Today the earlier painting is in the Los Angeles County Museum, the later one is in the Bharat Kala Bhavan in Varanasi and no one in Pintu Bahī has ever heard of Vanaratna.[49]

The Malla period (1200–1769) is characterized by much more abundant information. The early period, down to the end of the reign of Yakṣa Malla (1482 AD) presents a picture that is a continuation of the so-called Ṭhakuri period with references in a variety of sources to *vihāras* and the manuscripts copied by those who live there. By 1482 we have references to at least forty-four of the extant monasteries and another seventy-six which no longer exist.[50] There are an increasing number of references to Vajrācāryas. The earliest reference to a Vajrācārya who is definitely a native of the Valley comes from a copper-plate inscription dated 218 NS (1097–8 AD), which refers to one Vajrācārya Dharma Siṃha of Vajraśīla Mahāvihāra, one of the still extant main *bāhās* of the *Ācārya-Gūṭhī*.[51] After 1100 AD there are abundant references to Vajrācāryas and their *bāhās*.

The monks continue to be referred to as *bhikṣu*, *śākya-bhikṣu* or *śākya-vaṃśa* implying descent from the clan of Śākya, a claim still made by some of the Śākyas. The term *brahmacarya-bhikṣu* appears for the members of the *bahīs* in Patan. A manuscript of 561 NS (1440–41 AD) gives rules for the conduct of the *bare-chuyegu* (*vandechuya* in the text) in a Patan monastery – Vaṃ Bāhā, one of the extant main *bāhās*. It lists the various donations that are to be made at the time of initiations and specifically states that if any member of the saṅgha has a son who is of a lower caste (*jātī*) than himself (if he is the son of a woman of a caste lower than *bare*), the boy is not to be initiated.[52] This is a clear statement of three facts: the members of the saṅgha are married and have sons, membership in the saṅgha is limited to sons of members, and pure caste status is a prerequisite for initiation.

As one moves into the late Malla period, after Yakṣa Malla one gets further unequivocal references to married *bhikṣus*. An inscription of 631 NS (1510–11 AD) refers to one *śākya-bhikṣu* Śrī Jyotirāja Pāla, his mother Ullāsa Lakṣmī and his wife Abhaya Lakṣmī.[53] An inscription of 635 NS (1514–15 AD) refers to one '*brahmacarya-bhikṣu* Śrījakarājajū and his wife Manamayī'.[54] From this time on there are a large number of such references, usually in inscriptions which record

donations and repairs to the *vihāras*. Such inscriptions often list the names of all the members of a donor's family. Few such inscriptions have survived from the earlier periods, so one cannot draw any conclusions about when such married monks first appeared, or when the custom became general. Even the term *bhikṣuṇī* is occasionally used for the wife of a Śākya or Vajrācārya.[55]

When celibate monks entirely disappeared is a question that simply cannot be answered at the present state of our knowledge. I have been given concrete examples of celibate Newar monks in the Valley within the past two hundred years, but they were clearly exceptions to the rule and individual, isolated occurrences. They seem to have been men who had spent some time in Tibet, received ordination there as Mahāyāna *bhikṣus* and continued their practice when they returned home. Most of them seem not to have been *bare* but *Udāya*, i.e., men who by caste were excluded from the rank of monk (*bare*) in Nepal. Slusser is of the opinion that there were celibate monks in the Valley up to the seventeenth century.[56] This opinion seems to be based on Wright's chronicle, (= *History of Nepal*) which states (in speaking of the arrangements for the *vihāras* made by the king of Patan in the seventeenth century): "The Yampi Bihār, built by Sunaya Misra was nirbānic (i.e., the inhabitants did not marry) . . ."[57] It must be noted that this interpretation of *nirbānic* is Wright's not the chronicle's, and it is clear from the rest of the account that they were in fact married.

David Gellner's recent paper on the *vihāras* of Patan has shed considerable light on this whole passage in Wright's chronicle. Gellner has gone back to the original Nepali text; and it is clear that Wright's translators have omitted several key words and mistranslated others. Gellner treats this passage in the context of his treatment of Cikaṅ Bahī of Patan, which is the one exception to the general pattern of decay in the *bahīs*. Cikaṅ Bahī has a large saṅgha of 135 Śākyas. This saṅgha is very active; the *bahī* buildings have been kept in good repair (and are currently being extensively renovated), and over the last hundred and fifty years they have built and consecrated several branches. This seems to have been a result of two factors: the relative wealth of these families and the fact that they have kept alive something of the original traditions of the *bahīs*. One of the aged elders of Cikaṅ Bahī gave Gellner the following account:

> "When the *bāhā* were inhabited by married *śākya-bhikṣus* who worked for their living, there were still *brahmacarya-bhikṣus*, unmarried monks who did no work, in the *bahī*. In the *bāhā* they did tantric rituals, had *gūṭhīs*, (i.e. annual ritual obligations] and so on, but in the *bahī* all they had to do was keep the rule of celibacy (*brahmacarya pāle yāye*). Then one day the king decided that the 1200 *ropanī* of land belonging to the Knoti Bahī was too much, and he took the land to feed his soldiers. 'Since you live by begging,' he said, 'go ahead and beg!' Eventually they had to marry and find work, although the 64 kinds of work had already been given out to the 64 castes. So they did as the Śākyavaṃśa were doing."[58]

What this seems to indicate is that the *bahīs* are relics of an earlier and celibate tradition. For a long time after the distinctive feature of these communities, their celibacy, had been abandoned they continued many of their traditions. Finally, in the face of the overwhelming popularity of the *bāhā* traditions, the ritual and social high status of the Vajrācāryas, and the official sanction of this tantric Buddhism (with its round of ritual which fit so well into the structure of 'Hindu society') by the ruling elite, the *bahīs* were relegated to a place outside the mainstream of the Buddhist tradition of the Valley. Perhaps it is in this sense that the term *bahir* (outside) has the greatest import.

This line of reasoning is confirmed by the relevant passage in Wright's chronicle. Siddhi Narasiṃha, the king of Patan, had called together the elders of the 'Fifteen Bāhā', and made arrangements for their government. He then called the elders of the twenty-five *bahīs* of Patan. The chronicle calls these *vihāras* '*nirvāṇik vanaprastha*'. Wright explains this term as meaning "the inhabitants did not marry", though it is abundantly clear from the chronicle that they were in fact married. The term seems meaningless because Wright's translators have omitted the contrasting term which the chronicle writers used for the *bāhās*: '*saṃsārik tantrik vihāra*' ('this-worldly tantric *vihāra*'). The chronicle clearly contrasts *nirvāṇik vanaprastha vihāras* (*bahīs*) and *saṃsārik tantrik vihāras* (*bāhās*). When the king tried to make reforms in the *bahīs* similar to the reforms he made in the *bāhās*, the members of I Bahī complained that since they followed the other-worldly forest-dwelling dharma they could not take the tantric initiation of those who are members of a worldly tantric *vihāra*. The chronicle then describes the arrangements made for the *bahīs* in general and especially for I Bahī concluding:

> "In this way the rules were established both for the worldly tantric (*saṃsārik tantrik*) monasteries and for the other-worldly forest-dwelling (*nirvāṇik vanaprastha*) monasteries."[59]

One sees here an intermediate stage. Celibacy had disappeared, but the *bahīs* were still repositories of a different tradition which their members wanted to preserve. However, their efforts were doomed as they were caught in an anomalous situation. They were custodians of the tradition of the celibate monks, but they were not celibate. The king was anxious to make all of his subjects conform to the traditional customs of Hindu society. One of these customs was the performance of the fire sacrifice (*homa*) after the death of a member of a family in order to purify the household and its members. Since they were married men with families, they must also adopt this custom, and for this they must have a priest who is empowered to perform such a sacrifice. He may be Buddhist, but he must be a Vajrācārya, as the priests from *bahīs* were not recognized (by their own people or the majority community) as Vajrācāryas and hence did not perform the fire sacrifice. So Vajrācāryas from Dhuṃ Bāhā were assigned to be the priests of I Bahī. The *bahī* priests continued to function for rituals pertaining to the monastery itself, but Vajrācāryas from the *bāhās* became the family

priests of the families attached to the *bahīs*. This arrangement further blurred the lines of distinction between *bahīs* and *bāhās* and today few people know where the line is and what it signifies.

Gellner concludes his analysis of the situation of the *bahīs* with the following statement:

> "The decline of the *bahī* was evidently already under way when Siddhi Narasiṃha made his reforms, since the chronicle tells us that certain *bahī* were empty, their inhabitants having moved on after taking up the householder *dharma*. The members of the *bahī* made a virtue of their being the descendants of the last truly celibate monks, but this was not enough to stop a steady decline in population. Wherever possible members must have transferred to *bāhā*; but precisely because such practice is in theory not allowed it is impossible to trace it or prove it. The lower prestige of the *bahī* is due to the fact that the Buddhism of the Newars is Tantric: celibate monastic Buddhism, of which the *bahī* are the most prominent representatives, is given a place, but only the lowest one. The *bahī* themselves have been less and less able, and less and less interested, to combat this assessment."[60]

These considerations lead to three conclusions: (1) It is the *bahīs* not the *bāhās* which are the repositories of a celibate monastic tradition. (2) In the days when celibate communities existed, if celibate monks decided to become householder monks, they left their celibate monastery (even if it meant leaving the place empty) and joined or founded a *bāhā*. They did not turn a *de jure* celibate institution into a householder monastery. (3) Celibacy as such had ceased to be observed in the *bahīs* by the seventeenth century. (Recall the inscription of 1514–15 noted above which speaks of a married *brahmacarya-bhikṣu*.)

Even in the days when celibacy was observed in these monasteries, it had its unique features. Wright's chronicle recounts the foundation of I Bahī (Yaṃpi Vihāra) in an earlier era by one Sunaya Śrī Miśra, a brahman from the plains who had become a Buddhist monk. He spent a long time in Tibet studying the dharma, and finally settled in Patan where he built a monastery for himself (Yaṃpi Vihāra). Later two of his disciples, Govardhana Miśra and Kāśyapa Miśra came from the plains and each built separate *vihāras*. Later yet his mother and his sons came and found him in Nepal. He built for them a house near his *vihāra*. Then "when a grandson was born, he made his son become a bhikṣu also. His wife placed an image of Kuliśeśwarī to the south of the *bihar*. He made it a rule for his descendants, that, on the birth of a son, they were to leave their homes and live a life of celibacy."[61] Even in this early tradition where celibacy is enjoined, one finds that the monastery is not open to all but is a family affair for the descendants of Sunaya Śrī Miśra, and that a man first married and later retired from a worldly life to the monastery. Presumably a similar custom was adopted for the other two monasteries he founded for his disciples.

Are the *bahīs* then older institutions than the *bāhās* as some commentators have speculated? This is doubtful. My survey of the *bāhās* and *bahīs* shows that we have only two confirmed dates for extant *bahīs* before 1200 AD (i.e., the beginning of the Malla period). These are for Guita Bahī in Patan and Thaṃ Bahī in Kathmandu. On the other hand we do have several confirmed dates from the so-called Ṭhākurī period for *bāhās* of the *Ācārya-Gūṭhī* in Kathmandu and the 'Fifteen *Bāhās*' of Patan. We also know that several of the principal *bahīs* were *founded* in the time of Jayasthiti and Yakṣa Malla: Ubā Bahī and Ibā Bahī in Patan, Nhāykaṅ and Syaṅgu Bahī of Kathmandu. Another curious fact is that except for two manuscripts copied in Dugaṅ Bahī (Ṣaḍakṣari Mahāvihāra) in Kathmandu, we have no manuscripts copied in *bahīs*. Buddhist manuscripts were copied by people in *bāhās*, usually Vajrācāryas. However, I would hesitate to draw any conclusions from this data about the relative age of the *bahī*. We know so little about the so-called Ṭhākurī period that an argument from silence is very weak indeed; and we have no way of knowing if what data we have is in any sense a representative sample of data from that period. It may well turn out to consist of chance finds from certain groups that are in no way representative of the society as a whole. What does seem clear is that from the viewpoint of the dominant tantric Buddhists of the Kathmandu Valley, the *bahīs* represented an archaic form of Buddhism. No definite conclusions can be stated, but my own hypothesis is that the two institutions perhaps existed side by side from the earliest days. Gradually, and as a result of the ascendency of the Vajrācāryas and their form of tantric Buddhism, the celibate communities diminished, finally succumbing to the dominant tradition and becoming married 'celibate monks' (*brahmacarya-bhikṣu*), still trying to maintain something of their original traditions. If more accurate information on the Licchavi and so-called Ṭhākurī period is ever made available, we may well find that the celibate communities were always in the minority.

It has often been said that the *bāhās* and *bahīs* are all former monasteries. This statement is erroneous on two counts. First, in the accepted tradition of the Valley they are still monasteries, that is, abodes or shrines of an initiated saṅgha of householder *bhikṣus* and tantric priests, the Vajrācāryas. If the statement means to say that the *bāhās* and *bahīs* were formerly the residences of celibate monks, it is also inaccurate. Most of the *bahīs* may well have housed celibate monks at one time. The branch *bāhās*, which make up the bulk of the number, were clearly founded for a lineage of a householder *bāhā*. Though it cannot be proven yet with any degree of certainty, it is entirely possible that the main *bāhās* have always been what they are today: *vihāras* for a married saṅgha. We have no evidence that they were ever anything different, and how else explain the consistent tradition of a common descent for all members of the saṅgha and a common lineage deity? They may well have been founded by individuals who had once been celibate monks, but the individual then left his former monastery and founded a family *vihāra* (or a *saṁsārik tantrik vihāra*) which has been passed on by heredity from one generation of his descendants to the next.

The key seems to lie in the two words *saṃsārik:* having families and being busy with things of this world, and *tantric:* there are no Vajrācāryas in *bahīs*. The fact that in later days the members of the *bahīs* were indeed married is irrelevant; they were the guardians of a celibate tradition, a different tradition.[62] The absence of Vajrācāryas does not mean that the *bahīs* were non-tantric. Every *bahī* has its tantric shrine (*āgam*) and the rituals they perform are basically tantric. The point is that they were independent from the *bāhās* whose members were by definition householders and from Vajrācāryas who were priests to such families, and whose *bāhās* had a much more elaborate and structured ritual adapted to a householder tradition.

From the viewpoint of the *bāhās* this has a different meaning. Several years ago one informant gave me the following explanation of *bahīs*:

> "In the days when all of these communities were open to any qualified candidate the *bahīs* were a lower class of *vihāra*, where the *bhikṣu* would receive his first training. After completing his training he would become an *upasampradaya-bhikṣu* and join a *bāhā*, where he would study further and receive further training, which would eventually entitle him to become a Vajrācārya."

This is the view of a Śākya attached to one of the principal *bāhās* and expresses quite accurately the view of the dominant *bāhā* community who consider the tantric traditions of the Vajrācāryas to be a higher form of Buddhism. It may also reflect the reality. The *bahīs* may well have housed the last communities of celibate monks (true *brahmacarya-bhikṣus*) who had the leisure to pursue a study of the dharma. Their *vihāras* may well have been schools of the dharma where Buddhists from the *bāhās* could go to learn the basics of the dharma.

This line of reasoning, however, overlooks another explanation for the development of Newar Buddhism which is found in the later chronicles and is known to many people today. According to this tradition, Śaṅkarācārya came to Nepal, defeated the Buddhists, destroyed their manuscripts, killed many of the monks and forced the remaining monks to marry.[63] This is the source of a general theory upheld by some foreign and many Nepali writers that an abrupt change took place when nearly all the monks and nuns suddenly married and abandoned the traditional celibate life style of the *bhikṣu*.

There is no contemporary evidence for a visit by Śaṅkarācārya to Nepal from either Indian or Nepalese sources. He would have come to Nepal at the height of Licchavi power, but there is no evidence from the Licchavi inscriptions of such a visit and no evidence of a religious upheaval resulting in the virtual destruction of the Buddhist tradition. Furthermore, there is no evidence of either a visit by Śaṅkarācārya, or a concerted effort to destroy Buddhism in the earliest and most reliable chronicle, the *Gopālarājavaṃśāvalī*. To expect such an event at this time does not fit what evidence we have of the history of Buddhism in Nepal. From the evidence, it is clear that the greatest flowering of Buddhism in the

Valley of Nepal occurred long after Śaṅkarācārya in the Ṭhākurī period. If one has to explain the later changes by a single event or a period of persecution of the Buddhists, one would have to look for this in the Malla period or shortly before its inception.

It is entirely possible that the story arose from the coming of a later Śaṅkarācārya who is known from a single inscription dated 262 NS (1142 AD). According to the evidence of the inscription, this man twice visited Nepal and in his second visit in particular gathered quite a following. In his religious practice and doctrine he was the antithesis of the great Śaṅkarācārya – a follower of Dvaitavāda, an expert in yoga and a tantric master who covered himself with the ashes of a Śaiva *sādhu* and rode a bull. Even this inscription though gives no evidence of a violent attack on the Buddhists. It does indicate a growing influence of tantric Śaivism at the highest levels. He is reputed to have given *dikṣā* to the sons of the king, Śivadeva, to have repaired the Paśupatināth temple and to have introduced tantric rituals in the worship of the liṅgam there.[64]

What evidence we have from the Ṭhākurī period and the early Malla period supports the theory of a gradual change, eventually resulting in the disappearance of celibate monks. It is interesting that this myth of Śaṅkarācārya is found only in the later chronicles written in the last century after the Gorkhali conquest. In speaking with Vajrācāryas and Śākyas I have found a different strain in the oral tradition. I have been continually told that the state of Buddhism is due to the pressure exerted on the community by Hindu kings, who forced them to conform to the social model of standard Hinduism. The king always mentioned in this connection is Jayasthiti Malla. This must be linked with the general tradition that Jayasthiti Malla imposed a reorganized caste structure on Newar society. This contention is also found in the chronicles, but again only in the later chronicles. There is no mention of it in the *Gopālarājavaṃśāvalī*, the last part of which was composed during the reign of Jayasthiti Malla and is almost a day by day chronicle of events of his reign. That Jayasthiti Malla was a staunch Hindu is clear, and if he had reorganized society along Hindu lines one would expect this to be heralded in the chronicle. The only evidence we have of a king directly interfering in the running of the *vihāras* is the story in Wright's chronicle (still current in the oral tradition) of Siddhi Narasiṃha reorganizing the monasteries of Patan. His reorganization of the *vihāras* seems to be an attempt to induce some order into a chaotic situation and ensure that the traditions are preserved. Objections were only raised by members of the *bahīs*, who complained that he was forcing on them a custom at variance with their traditions. Yet it is clear that he does this only because they are not what they claim to be: celibate monks. If they had been celibate monks without families there would have been no need to impose family priests on them. I would see the myth of Śaṅkarācārya as a reflexive attempt by the better educated and more reflective members of the Buddhist community to explain the discrepancy they perceive between the Buddhism of the Mahāyāna sūtras or the tantric texts and the way it is lived by the community at large.

In light of this one must ask the question: is Newar Buddhism corrupt? A resounding 'yes' has been given by almost every western writer on Newar Buddhism.[65] Yet what does it mean to say that Newar Buddhism is corrupt? It can be taken in two senses. It could mean that the type of Buddhism practised in Nepal is itself corrupt, or it could mean that the present situation is a deterioration from an earlier period when a pure, pristine type of Buddhism was practised.

One has the impression that many writers find Newar Buddhism corrupt because it is tantric. This is a biased judgement, and ultimately any evaluation of Newar Buddhism must be made against the yardstick of their Mahāyāna-Tantra tradition. A common complaint is that it is mixed-up with Hinduism. Again, this often seems to be a judgement of tantric Buddhism with its multiplicity of Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, protective deities and demons, plus the tantric ritual. The iconography of many such deities has been 'borrowed' from the Hindus, or better from the general treasury of Indian tradition. Thus, many forms of Avalokiteśvara (e.g., Nīlakaṇṭha-Lokeśvara) show heavy Śaivite borrowings and the very name Lokeśvara is ambiguous to the outsider. But Avalokiteśvara is not Śiva and no Buddhist would conflate the two. The rituals performed by the Vajrācāryas and the rituals performed by the Hindu tantric priests may seem identical to the casual observer, but the meaning and purpose of the rituals is totally different.

The most common complaint concerns caste – the *bhikṣus* have become a caste and the saṅgha is a closed society. This is indeed contrary to the Buddhist tradition that the saṅgha is open to men and women of any caste. Yet the complaint is often made against the background of a very questionable thesis, namely that Buddhism was a revolt against caste and that caste was unknown among the Buddhists. Buddhism was a revolt against caste to the extent that it denied that 'salvation' was open only to the brahman or the high caste and that it admitted all comers into the saṅgha.[66] However, throughout its history in India, Buddhism existed in a caste society. The monk could withdraw from that society to his *vihāra*, but the lay Buddhist remained very much a part of Hindu society and lived according to its traditions, making use of the brahmans to perform the usual rituals and initiate his sons into their caste. By becoming a Buddhist a man chose a different way of salvation, he did not opt out of (Hindu) society. What a study of Newar Buddhist society then presents us with is not so much a corrupt form of Buddhism, as some inkling of the way Buddhism functioned in India as a part of the Indian (Hindu) scene. It is indeed, as one writer has called it, 'the survival of Indian Buddhism'. With the disappearance of Buddhism in India, Nepal was cut off from a source of renewal, and because of the very closed and confined nature of the society of the Valley its position within a Hindu society was pushed to its logical conclusion – the monks became a caste. Yet this development which is so decried is probably the most important factor in the survival of Buddhism in the Valley. It survived because the monks became a caste, thereby insuring that their sons would of necessity be ordained *bhikṣus* in order to maintain their place in society. This created a permanent

Buddhist community and prevented its complete absorption by Hinduism, as happened in India. What is surprising is that so much of the tradition has survived to the present day.

The question of the deterioration of the Buddhist tradition of the Valley is somewhat vexed. It has generally been presumed that the Valley, and especially Patan, had a glorious Buddhist past characterized by large communities of celibate monks and a great number of scholars and pandits. Speaking of Patan, Snellgrove has written: "Patan must have been a kind of vast university-city, differing little in its mode of life from similar towns in medieval Europe. In fact its buildings, its traditions, its way of life, must have been modelled on the great monastic universities of central India."[67] Again: "This city was once a place of sanctity and learning, where monks and pandits were glad to come and visit. Some came from India to teach. Others from Tibet to learn."[68]

From Nepalese sources we have little to support such a thesis. We know that in the medieval period there were a great number of monasteries and a great number of *bhikṣus* and *śākya-bhikṣus*, especially in Patan and Kathmandu. We know that a lot of manuscripts were copied in this period. Manuscript copying is not scholarship, and the evidence from the colophons is that the manuscripts were copied, often on commission, to gain merit either for the copier or for the one who commissioned them. Internal evidence suggests that the manuscripts, like the manuscripts of early medieval Europe, were copied by monks who did not understand the language. Manuscript copying was a profession which did not presuppose a knowledge of Sanskrit or of Mahāyāna philosophy. Many of the manuscripts were tantric ritual texts and we see a growing influence of tantric ritual and the dominance of the whole Buddhist scene by the Vajrācāryas. *Vihāras* continued to be built and repaired, often by the Hindu elite, *caityas* were erected, and Buddhist art flourished, especially the making of metal caste images and woodwork. The cache of palm leaf land deeds from this period suggests that the *bhikṣus* were very busy with buying and selling land and the management of such property. They also contain several references to Śākyas as *suvarṇākara*: goldsmiths. By 1440 it is clear that *bhikṣus* of the *bāhās* of Patan are married men and the saṅgha a family and caste affair.

From Tibetan sources we know of a number of learned scholars and famous *siddhas* who flourished in the Valley from the eleventh to the fifteenth century. Some of these were Indian, some Nepalese, but none of them are remembered today by the Nepalese. In Kathmandu the memory of four great *siddhas* has remained alive: Mañjuvajra, Līlāvajra, Suratavajra, and Vākvajra. To these must be added Śāntikarācārya who is revered as the first Vajrācārya. All of these men were tantric *siddhas*, and even they are mere shadows. No one knows when they lived or what they did beyond some legendary accounts of their use of tantric power. The scholars have been totally forgotten, as though they were irrelevant to the whole tradition. Perhaps the medieval picture is much closer to what we find in the late Malla period. Scholars there were, but they were the exception to the rule; and what scholarship there was, withered once it was cut off from a

source of renewal in India. Buddhism in the Valley has always been a popular religion catering to the needs of a largely uneducated and agricultural society which has always been a caste Hindu society, though perhaps less rigidly so before Jayasthiti Malla.

Despite this, every Newar would admit that today a deterioration has set in. The story cited above of the painting of Vanaratna is a case in point. 125 years ago he was remembered, and it was so important to the people of Pintu Bahī to preserve his memory that they made a new copy of the faded painting. Within the past thirty years the paintings were both sold and Vanaratna has been forgotten. People will point to the deteriorating state of the *vihāras*, especially in Kathmandu where soaring cement boxes replace sections of the *bāhā* complex, so that all that is left of the original architecture is the shrine of the *kwāpā-dya*. Except at a few places, like Jana Bāhā in Kathmandu and some of the main *bāhās* in Patan, rituals, are performed perfunctorily with few people in attendance. Fewer people attend many of the festivals each year, and there is more and more of a carnival atmosphere. Many people call the Vajrācārya for only the most essential rituals, and even at these one often finds that the family leaves the priest to perform the rituals alone. They are present at the beginning or only when their presence is required. Vajrācāryas are poorly paid for their services. People are paying them the same stipends they were years ago before inflation, and it is impossible for a man to make a decent living functioning only as a priest. One has the impression that they are providing a service that the people still feel obliged to make use of but one which they find increasingly irksome or irrelevant. Many young Śākyas and Vajrācāryas know of their *bāhā* only as the place where they received their caste initiation. One Śākya of Patan, about thirty years old, says he has visited his *bāhā* only once: at the time of his initiation. He does not remember the name of the *bāhā* and can give only the most general indications of its location. There are few Vajrācāryas today who know any Sanskrit and who can explain the Dharma or even explain the rituals they perform. When questioned by their clients they respond that it is all secret and they cannot explain it to any but the initiated.

These changes are a part of the general socio-economic and political changes which began with the Gorkhali conquest, but have intensified since 1951 when Nepal was opened up to the outside world. The most important factor in these changes, which affect all sectors of Newar society and not just the *vihāras* or the Buddhists, is the undercutting of the economic basis of Newar cultural institutions. All Newar cultural institutions are regulated by *gūṭhīs* and financed by revenue from *gūṭhī* lands. Several factors have cut into this revenue. The most obvious is the ever increasing population of the *vihāras*. The members of the families who farm the land of the *vihāras* are also increasing. Land is not increasing. A given piece of land must now support more farmers and feed more people at *gūṭhī* feasts. Even if all the endowments had remained intact, the whole system would be under strain. But they have not. Some lands were confiscated by the Gorkhalis when they conquered the Valley, and more agricultural

land was taken by the Ranas to build their palaces from the latter part of the last century up to 1950.

The most important factor, though, has been the Land Reform, effectively implemented in the Valley. Land reform gave and guaranteed rights to the tenants who farmed the land, and it limited the amount of rent they have to pay to their landlords, whether individuals or corporate bodies such as a *gūṭhī*. Secondly, land reform seems to have given the *coup de grâce* to the bond of trust which existed between the *bāhā* communities and the cultivators of their land, the Jyāpūs. The members of the *vihāra-saṅghas* were the religious leaders of the Jyāpū community – the Vajrācāryas served as their priests and the Śākyas lived in and tended the religious centres which formed an important part of their religious-cultural milieu. They were also the only educated members of the community. To the Jyāpūs they were all *gurujū*. Whereas most landlords of the Valley are present on the day of the harvesting of the rice, either personally or through their agents, and make sure that every grain of rice is measured and that they get their share, this was not the custom of the *vihāra-saṅghas*. The Jyāpūs harvested the rice and, without fail, they brought the customary share, or a payment in cash to the *vihāra*. The members of the saṅgha seldom, if ever, visited the site of their lands; they knew they were safe in the care of the Jyāpūs and that they would get their due share. This arrangement was under strain because of the increasing press on the land. Land reform bestowed on the farming community an increased sense of security and independence. In many cases they simply stopped bringing the share to the *vihāra*, and the members of the *vihāra*, suffered in silence. Furthermore, many of the Jyāpūs have taken further advantage of land reform and the confused state of ancient records to lay claim to the land as owners and not simply as tenants. They simply got their names registered in the field book of the cadastral survey. It takes documentary proof and a court case to dispossess the man whose name is listed on that field survey. Again, members of the *vihāra-saṅghas* have deplored this, but done nothing. Much of this shows also a loss of a feeling of solidarity among the *bare*. In fact, it is not only the Jyāpūs who have taken advantage of the changed circumstances. I have been given many concrete examples of members of the saṅgha getting *gūṭhī* land registered in their own names and then selling it off. In a very few cases the saṅgha has taken the initiative, sold off their *gūṭhī* land and put the money obtained into a trust or simply a long-term deposit in the bank. In this way their endowment has changed from fields to a deposit in the bank. The annual income continues to fund the feasts and other activities of the *gūṭhī*. However, this fixed annual income buys less and less each year, unlike the old income which was a fixed quantity of produce or a fixed percentage of the harvest.

Along with this undercutting of the economic basis is a growing change in the life style of the *bare*, especially in Kathmandu. Many of the *bare* are in businesses which have prospered, or in government service. When a family has the means they usually sell off their cramped quarters in the *vihāra* and build a

house on the outskirts of the city. Others find that there is simply not room enough in the *vihāra* for their growing family, and either buy or rent quarters wherever available in the city. This migration is breaking up the old communities. Whereas in former times all members of the saṅgha lived in the *vihāra* and thus shared in the daily round of ritual, the monthly and yearly observances and the local festivals, they now return to their *vihāra* only for the annual festival or the worship of the lineage deity. In some cases they return only for the all-important initiation of their sons. The round of ritual and the stories told during the rituals served as the catechesis of the young – the vehicle by which the traditions of the community, its values and obligations were passed on to the young. This has been lost. Even for the young who still live in the *vihāra* there are more alluring attractions than watching rituals – Hindi films, videos, or a stroll with their friends down New Road. This pattern is most obvious in Kathmandu, but in ten years' time the situation in Patan will be identical.

It is also the Śākyas and Vajrācāryas, and more so the wealthy trading class among the Buddhists of Kathmandu, who have taken the greatest advantage of the availability of modern education. This has had two effects. Vajrācāryas who have the education go into the professions or into government service, with the result that the young Vajrācāryas who are left to carry on the tradition are the least educated members of the community. The better educated Buddhists who want to preserve their Buddhist traditions then have no one within their own tradition to turn to for an exposition of Buddhism commensurate with their own education.

Many sincere Buddhists within the community are acutely aware of the crisis this has provoked. Groups have been formed and efforts are being made to spread the Dharma through books, seminars, singing groups, etc., but one wonders if a renewal of traditional Mahāyāna Buddhism is possible without an educated and celibate saṅgha. A true revival, however, is taking place, but it is a Theravāda revival: another matter.

Notes

1 Not all scholars agree in identifying the Licchavis of Nepal with those of Vaiśālī known from Indian History and the Buddhist records. The name is unusual, and all we really have is a common name. What is clear is that the Licchavis of Nepal came from the plains as they were very clearly caste Hindus with a highly developed Sanskrit culture.

2 D. L. Snellgrove, "Appendix" in Etienne Lamotte, *Towards the Meeting with Buddhism*, Rome 1970, 129–30.

3 The etymology of this word is clear from the Malla period inscriptions where the Sanskrit term and the derivatives *vāhāra/bāhāra/bāhāl* are interchanged, often within the same inscription. See Locke, *Buddhist Monasteries of Nepal*, Kathmandu: forthcoming, 479, n. 1.

4 This custom of protective deities goes back to ancient times. I-Tsing, who travelled through India in the latter part of the seventh century, reports that it was common to find an image of Mahākāla near the door or in the kitchen of the great Indian *vihāras*.

He identifies him as belonging to the beings of the Great God (Maheśvara = Śiva) and placed there to protect the *vihāra*. I-Tsing, *A Record of the Buddhist Religion*, Delhi 1966, 38.

5 All of these wood carvings have been photographed and described in Kerel Rujik van Kooij, "The Iconography of the Buddhist Wood Carvings in a Newar Monastery in Kathmandu (Chusyā-Bāhā)", *JNRC* 1, 39–82.

6 The earlier Newari form is found in a number of documents. For the Sanskrit term see Sankarmān Rājvamsi, "Sthitimallako pālāko Vi. Sam. 1545ko Māncandra Śakyako Tāmraptra ra Tyasko Aitihāsik Vyākhyā", *Pūrṇimā* 4, 54–55.

Some have interpreted *kwāpā* as a shortened form of *kwātha*. (See for example Siegfried Lienhard, "Nepal: the Survival of Indian Buddhism in a Himalayan Kingdom", in Heinz Bechert and Richard Gombrich, *The World of Buddhism*, London 1984, 112). *Kwātha* is a Newari term for a fort and it is true that some of the *vihāras* were referred to as forts, especially *bahīs* on the edge of the city and two *bāhās* now called Kwa Baha. However, most of the *vihāras* were not forts and were not referred to as forts. I have heard this etymology only from people at Kwā (= Kwātha) Bāhā in Patan. Informants at other *vihāras* have consistently denied this etymology; and, more important, the term *kwāthapāla (deva)* does not occur in any document.

7 See Hemrāj Śākya, *Buddha Mūrti Chagu Adhyayana*, Kathmandu, 1097 NS (Nepal Samvat), 90.

8 This figure appears on a number of early monuments such as the seventh century *caitya* at Dhwākā Bāhā in Kathmandu, where Pal tentatively identifies it as Maitreya. The *caitya* has four figures: Śākyamuni Buddha, two Bodhisattvas and this figure. Though Maitreya is usually portrayed as a Bodhisattva, he is also portrayed as a Buddha, and there seems to be no reason to have two images of Śākyamuni on the same monument. Furthermore, on some similar monuments the fourth figure is another form of Maitreya which is unmistakable. Pratapaditya Pal, *The Arts of Nepal*, Part I, Leiden 1974, 28.

9 For a complete description of this *maṇḍala*, see *Niṣpaṇayogāvalī*, 60–68, and for the Sanskrit text 54–65.

10 See *Sādhanamālā*, No. 61. This tantric deity assumed a very prominent place in the devotion of the Newar Buddhists in the Late Malla period. No one has been able to explain the sudden popularity of this deity, which is not found in earlier iconography.

11 *Sādhanamālā*, No. 62, 63. This deity belongs to the lineage of Amitābha, while Dharmadhātuvāgīśvara belongs to the lineage of Vajrasattva, but informants have consistently equated the two to me.

12 See Marie Therese de Mallman, *Introduction à L'Iconographie du Tantrisme Bouddhique*, Paris 1975, 206; and B. Bhattacharyya, *The Indian Buddhist Iconography*, Calcutta 1968, 206. There is also a Nāmasaṅgīti Mañjuśrī which is found in the *Sādhanamālā*, No. 82, but this is quite a different deity – a form of Mañjuśrī with three faces and four arms. The Nepalese Nāmasaṅgīti is identified as a form of the Buddha himself.

13 This is the well-known Ha (or Hakhā) Bāhā of Patan.

14 *Bare*, and more especially its Nepali corruption *bāṇḍā*, is considered to be a derogatory term and hence is seldom used today by the *bare* themselves. I continue to use it here because there is no other inclusive term which applies to both Śākyas and Vajrācāryas; and in speaking of the *vihāra-saṅgha* it is important to emphasize that they form one group with equal rights and duties.

15 See Sukamar Dutt, *Buddhist Monks and Monasteries of India*, London 1962, 136 and *passim* for descriptions of the *pūjā* performed in Indian monasteries; also I-Tsing, *op. cit.*, 147–50.

16 See John Locke, *Karuṇāmaya*, Kathmandu 1980, 175–181, for a description of the more complete rituals still performed at Jana Bāhā in Kathmandu. Hemrāj Śākya gives the following schedule of rituals formerly followed at Bhinchu Bāhā in Patan:

1 Early in the morning, about 4:30, the *dya-pālā* should rise and open the outer door of the shrine of the *kwāpā-dya*.
2 The *dya-pālā* goes for a ritual bathing (*pañca-snāna*).
3 He sweeps the floor of the shrine.
4 He washes all of the *pūjā* vessels.
5 He prepares the materials for the *pañcopacāra-pūjā* (flowers, incense, a light, scent and food). While he is doing this a group of devotees gather to recite the *Nāmasaṅgīti* and other Mahāyāna sūtras.
6 In order to arouse the mind of enlightenment in himself the *dya-pālā* recites a hymn (*gāthā*) *known as the Akāśā-dhātu*.
7 He recites verses from the Mahāyāna sūtras.
8 As the group in front of the shrine recite the *Nāmasaṅgīti*, begging bowls are offered to the Buddha.
9 The *dya-pālā* opens the inner door of the shrine and laying aside his street clothes, he dons the saffron robe of a monk.
10 He takes the large metal plate used for the offerings to the Buddha and meditates on its meaning as he recites an appropriate verse.
11 He performs a *nāga-pūjā* to the water vessel used for the rituals.
12 Before going into the inner sanctum of the shrine, he places the ceremonial metal mirror on the ground in front of the shrine and draws the letter 'Oṃ'.
13 Ringing a bell and offering grains of rice three times he performs the ritual known as the purification of the body (*kāya-śodhana*).
14 Pouring a stream of water over the metal mirror he recites a hymn (*gāthā*) called *Yan-maṅgalam-sakalasattva-hṛdi-sthitasya*. (This is the daily, ritual bathing of the image of Buddha.)
15 Taking the mirror in his hand, he recites the *gāthā Prativimva-samadharma* as he goes round the deity three times.
16 He sprinkles the worshippers who have gathered with the bathing water as he recites the *gāthā Abhiṣeka-mahāvajra*.
17 Pouring out the remaining water he traces a *maṇḍala* known as the *dhara-maṇḍala*.
18 Just before dawn he touches this *dhara-maṇḍala* which he had traced earlier and draws on it a crossed *vajra*.
19 On this spot he places the 'shoes' of the *kwāpā-dya*.
20 He takes the wooden gong outside and striking it 108 times he recites the *Aparamitā-dhāraṇī*.
21 He offers a libation to the seven Tathāgatas (Vipaśin, Sikhin, Viśvabhū, Krakucchanda, Kanakamuni, Kāśyapa, Śākyamuni).
22 He offers the *pañcopacāra-pūjā* with a meditation. (This is the main part of the morning worship, the *nitya-pūjā*.)
23 While this is going on, the group that gathered to recite the *Nāmasaṅgīti* recites a number of *gāthās*, a hymn to Vairocana and another hymn.
24 Recitation of the *Saptavidhānuttara-pūjāstotra*.
25 Recitation of the two *dhāraṇīs*, one in honour of Śākyamuni and the other in honour of Aparamitā.
26 Recitation of the *Daśapāramitā-stotra* and the *Buddhatrailokyanātha-stotra*.
27 Recitation of the *Bodhipariṇāmana-gāthā* and the *Anuttarabodhi-jñānapada*. (This concludes the early morning rituals.)
28 In the middle of the morning, between eight and nine AM the *dya-pālā* places a

sort of throne or seat on the *maṇḍala* just outside the main entrance to the shrine and having placed a *caitya* on this he offers a libation to it.

29 Next he takes the key to the main door of the shrine and ringing a bell he makes a circuit of all the shrines and *caityas* in the complex.

30 When he comes back he sounds the wooden gong 108 times as before.

31 Again he offers the *pañcopacāra-pūjā*.

32 Waving the yak-tail fan he recites the *Daśapāramitā-stotra*.

33 Singing the praises of the Buddha, he closes the door of the shrine. (After this he goes to take his rice meal.)

34 Between two and three in the afternoon he again opens the shrine and sounds the wooden gong 108 times.

35 He recites the *Daśapāramitā-stotra* waving the yak-tail fan.

36 In the evening between five and six he again sounds the wooden gong 108 times and makes a circuit of the shrines in the compound as before.

37 Again he offers the *pañcopacāra-pūjā* to the Buddha.

38 About seven in the evening a group of devotees again gather to recite various hymns.

39 At the conclusion of the hymns they recite the *Daśapāramitā* and the *Buddha-trailokyanātha-stotras* after which the *dya-pālā* recites the *Dīpādāna-stotra*, lights a lamp and offers *ārati* to the Buddha. Then the devotees offer *ārati*, after which they are given a saffron *ṭīkā* and flowers. This concludes the *ārati* ceremony and the daily schedule of rituals.

17 John Locke, "Newar Buddhist Initiation Rites", *Contributions to Nepalese Studies*, Vol. II, 2.9.

18 *Ibid.*, 9.

19 *Ibid.*, 10.

20 *Ibid.*, 13.

21 This description is based on a *bare-chuyegu* ceremony I witnessed in Jana Bāhā in 1974; some details of the ceremony are slightly different in Patan, but it is essentially the same ritual.

22 Michael Allen, "Buddhism Without Monks: The Vajrayāna Religion of the Newars of Kathmandu Valley", *SA* 3, 1–10.

23 See Locke, *Karuṇāmaya*, 47–50. For an account of the long dispute which effectively broke the power of the Ācārya-Gūṭhī see Colin Rosser, "Social Mobility in the Newar Caste System", in C. von Fürer Haimendorf, (ed.), *Caste and Kin in Nepal, India and Ceylon*, Bombay 1966, 68–139.

24 According to tradition, the *bāhās* of Patan were reorganized by Siddhi Narasiṃha, the king of Patan, in the seventeenth century. When he made the new rules there were fifteen main *bāhās* in Patan. Later he amalgamated the two village institutions of Kirtipur and Cobhār to those of Patan, and later still a new one was founded, bringing the total to eighteen, but they continued to be called 'The Fifteen Bāhās'. See the section below on the main *bāhās*.

25 At Kwā Bāhā in Patan, six of the branches are semi-independent, performing their own initiations. They may well have been separate institutions that were amalgamated to Kwā Bāhā. This is the only case of such semi-independent branches. In a recent article David Gellner has referred to these as independent branches and the other branches as Lineage Monasteries, a very accurate term. David Gellner, "The Newar Buddhist Monastery – An Anthropological and Historical Typology", 7, 39–9.

26 See Gellner, *op. cit.*, 19–25 for certain other differences he found in Patan, not all of them valid for Kathmandu.

27 See for example, Christoph von Fürer-Haimendorf, "Elements of Newar Social Structure", *JRAI*, No. 86, Part 2, 18–19, and Rosser, *op. cit.*

28 See Rosser, *op. cit.*
29 Niels Gutschow and Bernhard Kolver, *Bhaktapur*, Wiesbaden 1975, 56, 58.
30 Such power is still the key to understanding the villager's respect for the Vajrācārya. A few years ago Iswar Anand Śresthācārya, a Newari linguist, was collecting data on the vocabulary peculiar to a village festival. He was speaking with the eldest man of an entirely Jyāpū village and asked the man why they called the Vajrācārya and what he did. The man remarked that it was the custom. The interviewer kept returning to this question seeking a fuller answer. In exasperation the old man finally said, "Look, I am a simple villager. What do I know about such things. The Vajrācārya comes, he does his *pūjā* and recites his mantra and the pot of beer needed for the festival begins to shake. Then the festival can start. It can't start until the pot shakes."
31 The *jhānkrī* is the spirit healer of Nepal, a man possessed by the spirit of a deity who can cure diseases and overcome the malevolent influences of evil spirits or witches.
32 Cārumati Vihāra is not the official Sanskrit name of this *vihāra*, and Slusser concludes that the Newari name has given rise to both this popular Sanskrit name and the daughter of Aśoka. Mary Slusser, *Nepal Maṇḍala*, Princeton 1982, 276–7.
33 See Dhanavajra Vajrācārya, *Licchavikālkā Abhilekh*, Kathmandu, 2030 VS and Dilli Raman Regmi, *Inscriptions of Ancient Nepal*, New Delhi 1983, for the corpus of these inscriptions. For a survey of what is known of Buddhism from these inscriptions see also, Theodore Riccardi, "Buddhism in Ancient and Early Medieval Nepal", in A.K. Narain, (ed.), *Studies in the History of Buddhism*, Delhi 1980, 265–81.
Strangely, there are no pre-Licchavi Buddhist remains. There are a number of Hindu pieces from as early as the second century BC, but it is only from the fifth century onward that one finds Buddhist pieces. See Lain S. Bangdel, *The Early Sculptures of Nepal*, New Delhi 1982, 7.
34 Dhanavajra Vajrācārya, *Licchavikālkā Abhilekh*, 548–62.
35 *Ibid.*, inscpt. 77, 133, 134.
36 *Ibid.*, 77.
37 *Ibid.*, 133, 134.
38 *Ibid.*, 136.
39 *Ibid.*, 121.
40 Sylvain Levi, *Le Nepal*, 1, Paris 1905, 154–5.
41 See Vajracarya, *op. cit.*, 371, and Slusser 1:272–3.
42 At the present time there is a *bahī* at Svayambhū which is a fourteenth century foundation. There is also a community of Vajrācāryas (called *Bauddhācārya*) who are initiated at the Mahācaitya. They may be the successors of the ancient *bāhā* community, but they have no *vihāra* at the present time.
43 The term 'Ṭhākurī period' is most unsatisfactory as it purports to be a dynastic title; but there is no certainty that the earliest of these kings were indeed a new dynasty at all, and they were certainly not all of one dynasty. The Malla kings in turn may well be of the same dynasty as the last of the Ṭhākurī kings. Slusser (*Nepal Maṇḍala*) has used the term 'transitional period' and this has been followed by Luciano Petech in the new edition of his *Mediaeval History of Nepal*. However, a 'transitional period' of over three hundred years sounds strange indeed and seems to suppose a transition from one clear-cut situation to another. Furthermore, the new term has not been accepted by any Nepali historian.
44 Locke, *Buddhist Monasteries of Nepal*, Appendix II and III. It is important to emphasize that these records simply mention these monasteries in passing. They do not indicate the date of foundation, but state the fact of their existence at the date mentioned. They may well be much older. There were also probably many more monasteries in existence which are not mentioned in these random finds.

45 Hemrāj Śākya, *Śivadeva Saṃskārita Śrī Rudravarṇa Mahāvihāra Sthita Talpatra-Abhilekh*, Patan, 2524 BS. A critical edition of nearly all of these documents prepared by Prof. Bernhard Kolver and Hemraj Śākya is currently in the press.
46 Alka Chattopadhyaya, *Atīśa and Tibet*, Delhi 1981, 322; George N. Roerich, (tr.), *The Blue Annals*, Delhi 1979, 247. See also Luciano Petech, *Mediaeval History of Nepal*, Rome 1984, 41–43 for a correction of the earlier translations of the relevant passages.
47 George Roerich, *Biography of Dharmasvamin*, Patan 1959, 55–6.
48 In his translation of the *Blue Annals*, Roerich consistently claims that Vāgīśvarakīrti and Phamtimpa are the same man. Nowhere does he give any evidence for the identification. It is clear that Vāgīśvarakīrti was an Indian and equally clear that Phamtimpa's brothers were Nepalese.
49 Ian Alsop, *The Crowns of the Vajrācāryas*, forthcoming.
50 Locke, *Buddhist Monasteries of Nepal*, Appendix I and II.
51 Hemrāj Śākya, *Śrīsvayambhū-Mahācaitya*, Kathmandu 1098 NS, 124.
52 Hemraj Śākya and T.R. Vaidya, *Medieval Nepal*, Kathmandu 1970, 30–31.
53 D.R. Regmi, *Medieval Nepal*, Calcutta 1965–6, Part 3, 69.
54 *Ibid.* 3: 104.
55 Locke, *Buddhist Monasteries of Nepal*, 481, n.4.
56 Slusser, *Nepal Maṇḍala* 1, 288–9.
57 Daniel Wright, (ed.), *History of Nepal*, Kathmandu 1972, 235–6.
58 Gellner, *op. cit.*, 25.
59 Gellner, *ibid.*, p. 30 from his retranslation from the original manuscript of the relevant passage from Wright's chronicle. This passage has been entirely omitted by Wright's translators.
60 Gellner, *ibid.*, 32.
61 Wright, *History of Nepal*, 116.
62 What is important is that these monasteries were *de jure* celibate institutions. This sort of reasoning is not so unusual. Nepali brahmans today will explain their superior status by the fact that they are forbidden to drink alcohol. When one points out that today many brahmans (perhaps even the informant) do, the informant will respond that this is irrelevant. What is important is that as a caste they are non-drinkers; and so they were defined in Nepalese law. The old code of law (*Mūlukī Ain*), in force until twenty five years ago, divided the clean castes into two broad categories: those who wear the sacred thread (*tagadhārī*) and those who drink alcohol (*matvalī*).
63 See for example Wright, *History of Nepal*, 118–20.
64 Dhanavajra Vajrācārya, "Madhyakālik Nepālkā Ek Prakhyāt Rājā Śivadeva", *Contributions to Nepalese Studies*, Vol. VIII, 1: 217–18.
65 See Stephen Greenwold, "Monkhood versus Priesthood in Newar Buddhism", in C. von Fürer-Haimendorf, *Contributions to the Anthropology of Nepal*, London 1974, 129–31, for selections from writers from Hodgson to Snellgrove. To these can be added Slusser's similar remarks, *Nepal Maṇḍala*, 1, 136–7.
66 Leinhard, *see references*.
67 Snellgrove, *Buddhist Himālaya*, Oxford 1957, 102–3.
68 *Ibid.*, 95.

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82

SEEING *CHEN-YEN* BUDDHISM

Traditional scholarship and the Vajrayāna in China

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Chen-yen (*mi-chiao*, "esoteric Buddhism") Buddhism was among the most important Buddhist traditions in the history of Chinese religion, yet many historians of religions, sinologists, and Buddhologists have never heard of it.

That Chen-yen has been invisible is itself an indication of traditional and modern biases. By becoming aware of these biases we can better discern the outlines of Chen-yen both as true Vajrayāna and as truly Chinese, and we can recognize Chen-yen as a political and religious movement which had a far more profound impact than is commonly acknowledged. Indeed, in viewing Chen-yen we can see one of the most comprehensive and unique developments of the Vajrayāna, one which changed the face of Chinese religion and which continues to the present day. I hope in this study to begin the process of the reclamation of the Chen-yen tradition as a distinctively Chinese form of Vajrayāna.

To begin reclaiming the outlines of this "lost" tradition, I first examine some of the biases which have rendered Chen-yen invisible. I then briefly discuss some key issues of Vajrayāna cosmology and practice, particularly the important notion of *siddhi*—the goal of ritual. In doing so I furnish some of the necessary materials for historians of religions to place Chen-yen in the context of Chinese religions, in the context of the Vajrayāna, and in the wider context of the history of religions. Finally, I discuss two of the most prominent facets of the Vajrayāna in China: rites for the salvation of hungry ghosts, and the unusual ninefold Vajradhātu maṇḍala. Both serve to illustrate common misperceptions about Chen-yen and to establish the true nature and persistence of the tradition.

The myth of the nonexistent tradition

Chen-yen's importance has been obscured because it has been viewed from a series of sectarian perspectives, perspectives which have been generated by the

Chen-yen 真言
mi-chiao 密教
Hui-kuo 慧果
Pu-k'ung 不空
Chin-kang-chih 金剛智
Shan-wu-wei 善無畏
tsa-mi (zomitsu) 雜密
ch'un-mi (jummitsu) 純密
I-ming 義明
Tai tsung 代宗
T'ang 唐
Sung 宋
Sung kao-tseng chüan 宋高僧傳
ch'eng-chiu 成就
hsi-ti 悉地
ch'u-shih ch'eng-chiu 出世成就
ch'eng-chiu hsi-ti 成就悉地
shih-chien ch'eng-chiu 世間成就
eh-kuei 餓鬼
p'u-tu 普度
Yü-lan-p'en hui 盂蘭盆會
yen-k'ou 焰口
Kuan-tzu-tzai 觀自在
Ti-tsang 地藏
kan-lu 甘露
hun 魂
lo-shu 洛書
T'ai-i 太一
ko-i 格義
ho-t'u 河圖
ming-t'ang 明堂
wu hsing 五行
chiu kung 九宮

Fig. 1 List of Chinese characters.

orthodoxies of Shingon Buddhism, neo-Confucianism, and Western sinology and Buddhology.

Like the parent of many a famous child, Chen-yen has been obscured by its offspring, Japanese Shingon. Shingon Buddhism was founded by Kūkai, who elaborated the teachings of his Chinese master Hui-kuo. Hui-kuo had been a disciple of Amoghavajra (Puk'ung), who with his master Vajrabodhi (Chin-kang-chih) had come to the eighth-century Chinese court as a Vajrayāna missionary. They had been preceded by a few years by Śubhākarasiṃha (Shan-wu-wei), and the three *ācāryas* ("teachers") are regarded in the Shingon tradition as "patriarchs" of the school. The Shingon tradition regards Hui-kuo as the last important master in a school which, from its perspective, died out just after the transmission

to Kūkai. Kūkai, the architect of Shingon, recounts his meeting with Hui-kuo: "I called on the abbot in the company of five or six monks from the Hsiming Temple. As soon as he saw me he smiled with pleasure and joyfully said, 'I knew that you would come! I have waited for such a long time. What pleasure it gives me to look upon you today at last! My life is drawing to an end, and until you came there was no one to whom I could transmit the teachings.' "[1] Based on this account, on the conflicting needs of establishing a legitimate line of transmission from India through China to Japan, and on the underscoring of the purity and uniqueness of Japanese Shingon, the Shingon tradition and scholars influenced by it have consigned Chen-yen to a fleeting moment in Chinese history. According to this perspective "true" Chen-yen existed as a moment of "pureness" between "miscellaneous" unsystematized tantra (*tsa-mi*) which existed before the *ācāryas* and later teachings which were influenced by Chinese and Indian folk tradition and by "degraded" forms of Hindu tantrism.[2] The obvious point of reference is the Shingon system of Japan. Works and rites produced before the *ācāryas* who had direct lineal contact with Kūkai are regarded as "unsystematic," "miscellaneous," and fragmentary. Works and rites developed in China or India after Kūkai returned to Japan are either unrecognized or "impure."

Modern scholars have found it hard to examine the Chinese Vajrayāna critically. For example, one specialist in Indian Vajrayāna recently recounted the story of the transmission of Vajrayāna from China to Japan thus:

> Kūkai . . . reached Ch'ang-an the capital towards the end of the year [804] and in the sixth month of the following year he visited master Hui-kuo at Ch'ing-lung Temple. Hui-kuo had inherited the branch of Tantric Buddhism represented by the *Tatṭvasaṃgraha-tantra* from Amoghavajra, of whom he was the successor, and the branch represented by the *Vairocanābhisambodhisūtra* from Hsüan-ch'ao, a disciple of Śubhākarasiṃha. Therefore he was the first person in the history of Tantric Buddhism to have received initiations into both branches. He welcomed Kūkai's arrival as if he had been expecting it, and initiated Kūkai into the two branches of Tantric Buddhism, transmitting to him the whole body of his teachings. As a result, Kūkai became his one and only successor to the integral form of Tantric Buddhism consisting of the two branches of the *Tattvasaṃgraha-tantra* and *Vairocanābhisambodhi sūtra*, for until then none of Hui-kuo's disciples had been initiated into both branches. Then, as if he had been living solely in order to transmit his teachings to Kūkai, Hui-kuo died in the twelfth month of the same year.[3]

This account is part of the piously embellished mythic corpus of the founding of the Shingon school, yet to this day it is repeated without caveat or circumspection by fine scholars.[4] The Chen-yen tradition is thus compressed into the life of a single individual, that of Hui-kuo. This is particularly ironic since, by

implication, Chen-yen is recognized as a Chinese creation, a recognition which is studiously ignored in most scholarship to this day. The convenient solution to this problem is the implied demise both of Hui-kuo and, not long after him, of the tradition in China.

On careful examination, one finds that the account is historically inaccurate and dubious in several ways. First, Hui-kuo was neither the only successor to Amoghavajra nor the first to receive initiation into the techniques of both texts. Indeed, it is now known that Śubhākarasiṃha, Vajrabodhi, and Amoghavajra were promulgating the teachings both of the *Mahāvairocana Sūtra* (*MVS*) and of the *Sarvatathāgatatattvasaṃgraha* (*STTS*).[5] Second, Amoghavajra's last will lists six fully initiated disciples, Hui-kuo among them. But it was Hui-lang who succeeded Amoghavajra as patriarch of the school, and he was recognized as such by the emperor.[6] Third, Kūkai's own account of his departure from Hui-kuo tells us of I-ming, the disciple who would carry on the teachings in China.[7] Fourth, while Kūkai was a brilliant young man, it is doubtful that he fully mastered the complex Vajrayāna teachings in six months. He certainly received the initiations, but these are not tantamount to mastery. Kūkai had studied the Vajrayāna to some extent before his trip to China. He received the initiations, collected texts, and on his return he synthesized his own style of Japanese Vajrayāna over a period of the next twenty years.[8]

Until quite recently what little work had been done on Chen-yen had been influenced by Shingon tradition, which led to a passive acceptance of the Shingon account, an account which elevates the uniqueness of Kūkai and focuses on him a special transmission, pure of taint and existing only long enough on Chinese soil for the fortuitous transmission to Japan.[9] By this account, Chen-yen could not exist before Hui-kuo or after him. This view is fundamental to some of the best scholarship on Chen-yen.[10] Chen-yen has thus been portrayed as an appendage to the orthodox foundation of Shingon lineages. This orthodox vision hinders us from seeing the important, influential, and unique Vajrayāna tradition which existed in China before the time of Kūkai, continued to develop after his departure, and which, to some extent, still exists today.

This narrow Shingon-centered view has recently been challenged by a growing recognition of Shingon as a form of Vajrayāna Buddhism and by overt exploration by Japanese and Western scholars of the similarities between the Indo-Tibetan Vajrayāna traditions and those of China and Japan.[11] The Indian link which was necessary for Shingon legitimacy, yet defiling in light of the sexual imagery of the Indo-Tibetan *Annutarayoga* tantras, has at last been fully acknowledged.[12] While this is encouraging, some of these studies now insist on understanding Shingon in the light of the fourfold classification of tantras employed in later Indo-Tibetan systems, in effect anachronistically replacing Shingon's set of orthodox prescriptions with those of the Tibetans.[13] Further, as I discuss below, most current interpretations of the Vajrayāna with their lopsided understanding of the path to enlightenment do little to help us understand its forms and importance in China.

But what is stunning is that there is little systematic exploration of the Chinese context and its effect on the development of East Asian Vajrayāna. With the exception of some of the researches of Osabe Kasuo, and some of the French school—R. A. Stein, M. Strickmann, A. Seidel, and their students—Chinese Vajrayāna has remained unknown and uncharted.[14] Further, the exceptions which I have just cited have been piecemeal in character, densely philological, and lamentably slow in their dissemination and impact. Particularly important are the research and seminar reports of R. A. Stein. Hidden in hard to find *Annuaire*, these researches have yet to influence wider audiences.[15] Indeed, the only books on East Asian Vajrayāna available in English totally ignore this scholarship and recite the orthodox Shingon version of the development of the tradition in China.[16] As I argue below, the Chinese context had as much impact on the shape of the Vajrayāna in China, Japan, and Korea as did its Indian roots.

But before I discuss these issues further, I must briefly touch on other causes for Chen-yen's invisibility. From the perspective of Neo-Confucian orthodoxy as promoted from the Sung dynasty onward, Chen-yen in particular and Buddhism and Taoism generally were anathema. The reign of the emperor Tai-tsung (762–79), during which the *ācārya* Amoghavajra was most powerful, is regarded as the epitome of the degrading influence of Buddhism on imperial institutions.[17] In the orthodox Confucian view this is the worst moment in the dynasty that was most guilty of Buddhist and Taoist fraternization.

Modern sinologists have picked up, largely unconsciously, these twin blinders of Shingon and Neo-Confucian orthodoxy, and these biases dovetail with late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Western views of China, in which Confucianism represented enlightened ethical rationalism and Buddhism and Taoism represented the magical and superstitious religion of the masses. Buddhism during the T'ang (618–907), especially before the An Lu-shan rebellion of 755 and the persecution of 845, is seen as the "apogee" of the religion in China. Thereafter there are—to quote one sinologist—"memories of a great tradition" and "decline."[18] Although the economic and social dimensions of Buddhism increased after the T'ang, "no outstanding Buddhist cleric such as Hsüan-tsang, Fa-tsang, or Chih-i emerged; no new school of Buddhist thought developed; no important Buddhist sūtra was translated."[19] Chen-yen in particular "declined."[20]

This sort of evaluation follows naturally from the premises of Western sinology and Confucian orthodoxy with their focus on great men and schools of philosophical discourse rather than on popular movements and ritual. Moreover, it is an evaluation reinforced by traditional Buddhist reckonings of what constitutes authoritative and "orthodox" tradition. Indeed, Stanley Weinstein notes that

> The most significant feature of the Buddhism of the post-An Lu-shan era was its "popular" character. Inasmuch as Buddhism had a mass following in China before the rebellion, it obviously contained ele-

> ments that had a broad appeal to the Chinese people. But this popular side tended to be despised or at best ignored by those eminent monks who enjoyed the patronage of the imperial family and the aristocracy. It is no coincidence that as military men and local officials assumed the role of sponsors of leading monks in the capital, the "popular" elements in Buddhism—particularly as represented by the Ch'an and Pure Land traditions—came to be increasingly stressed.[21]

The Chen-yen tradition should be added to this list along with Ch'an and Pure Land. It was supported by the military, by the T'ang imperial family with its rough military roots in the northwest, and by provincial officials.[22] This support continued in the widespread use of Chen-yen rites at small hereditary temples especially for the laity.[23] Chen-yen rites and techniques permeated other Buddhist schools, Taoism, and folk tradition.

But during the Sung dynasty, Chen-yen lineages faded into obscurity. Occasional notices by Japanese pilgrims shed small areas of illumination on the lineages that existed, but by then Chen-yen had become a conglomeration of ritual techniques handed down in the context of other lineages.[24] Given taxonomic categories based on great men, on schools, and on lineages, the standard evaluation of Chen-yen is perfectly understandable. Chen-yen's formal lineage vanished, and therefore it ceased to exist as a "school" in the eyes of Asian and Western high culture.[25] The Shingon claim thus appears quite reasonable.

Another significant factor in the disappearance of Chen-yen is a pervasive bias in high culture against religion practiced for "worldly" ends. Modern sinological evaluations merely echo the proper Confucian and even Buddhist bias against religion practiced for worldly gain. Thus, Tsan-ning, the compiler of the *Sung kao-tseng chüan*, notes: "According to the scheme of the Maṇḍala of the Five Divisions, young boys or virgins must be used as the media to summon spirits. It was once extremely easy to cure illness or exorcise evils. People in modern times, however, use this method to profit their body or mouth, therefore little result is obtained. Generally, these methods are held in contempt by the world. Alas, the deterioration of the Good Law has gone so far as this!"[26]

This last view is not merely the bias of the Buddhist establishment. It is also a bias of some contemporary interpreters of the Vajrayāna. It has become a commonplace in textbook treatments of Indian religion that the rise of the Vajrayāna signaled the decline of Buddhism in India, a decline that was triggered by Buddhism's loss of pristine purity.[27] I think it is no accident that some sinologists have applied the same reasoning to their own turf.

Evaluations of Chen-yen as materialistic fundamentally misunderstand the nature of the Vajrayāna in China and its role in the development of Buddhism from the mid-T'ang onward. Many scholars of Buddhism regard the pursuit of enlightenment as somehow necessarily detached from the various "applications" of Vajrayāna ritual to everyday life. Both pursuits are termed *siddhi*, but these mundane "applications" are clearly denigrated as being secondary to the pursuit

of enlightenment. Such an interpretation does violence to the basic principles of the Vajrayāna and betrays a modern, Western bias against anything in religion that seems remotely magical, too worldly, or political. We might term this a transcendentalist or essentialist bias, and it often manifests in interpretations of objectionable or worldly elements in the Vajrayāna as purely symbolic. David Snellgrove is among the few who have questioned this notion. In his *Indo-Tibetan Buddhism* Snellgrove has argued: "When modern apologists use the term 'symbolic' as though to suggest that the external practices were never taken in any literal sense, they mislead us. Central to tantric practice is the refusal to distinguish between the everyday world (*saṃsāra*) and the experience of nirvana."[28] In fact, Snellgrove defines the Vajrayāna as essentially concerned both with enlightenment and with practical ends: "All tantras of all classes promise both supramundane success (the gaining of Buddhahood sooner or later) and mundane successes, such as gaining prosperity, offspring, a particular woman, good harvests or rainfall, overcoming adverse influences such as various kinds of disease-causing evil spirits, curing the effects of poison, etc. It is sometimes suggested that while the tantras, later classified as inferior, cater for the more mundane requirements, the superior ones are concerned with more truly religious objectives. In fact all tantras are interested in precisely the same objectives, whether supramundane or mundane."[29]

It is this last point that I wish to develop here, for if we set aside the notions that Chen-yen disappeared or degenerated and consider instead the nature of Vajrayāna practice and the rites prominent in the Chinese context, we gain a very different, and challenging, view of Chen-yen Buddhism.

Chen-yen: Vajrayāna as applied realization

In 771 Amoghavajra wrote a memorial to the emperor Tai-tsung requesting that the texts he had labored to translate over a thirty-year period be entered into the official imperial catalog. In this memorial Amoghavajra says: "Among the teachings I have translated, the Yoga of the Tip of the Vajra is the path for quickly becoming a Buddha. . . . As for the remaining sections of the *Chen-yen* teachings . . . these I present to help the state avoid disasters, to keep the stars on their regular courses, and to insure that the wind and rain are timely."[30]

Throughout Amoghavajra's writings and in the writings of his spiritual grandson Kūkai, there is reiterated the assertion that the Vajrayāna (Chen-yen, Shingon) is the best method for the pursuit both of enlightenment and of various forms of "worldly" attainments. The notion of the intimate relationship between supramundane and mundane *siddhi* ("attainment") and between inner and outer *homa* ("immolation") is found in the root texts of the tradition and is the basis for apotropeic ritual.[31] This pursuit of a "dual goal" is implicit in Vajrayāna cosmology, and it is the key for "seeing" Chen-yen in China.

The Chen-yen tradition, particularly that founded by Vajrabodhi, Amoghavajra, and their successors, is based upon two tantric ritual texts, the *Mahāvairo-*

cana Sūtra and the *Sarvatathāgatatattvasaṃgraha*.[32] These texts originally had nothing to do with one another, other than the fact that both are major tantric Buddhist ritual texts whose central divinity is Mahāvairocana. In the Chen-yen system developed in the eighth-century Chinese court, the central structures of these two texts provided the blueprint for the ritual realization of *siddhi* and for the elaboration of a variety of apotropeic rites.

Although the texts came to be viewed as a pair, each text was originally meant to stand on its own, and each provides a comprehensive ritual vision, a cosmos to be realized in the *sādhana* (ritual evocation). As is the case with many Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna texts, the *Mahāvairocana Sūtra* and the *Sarvatathāgatatattvasaṃgraha* were intended to substitute for the entire *Tripiṭaka* and to be a summary and synthesis of Buddhist traditions.

Each of these texts contains two types of cosmology. One is a cosmology of progress and process, exemplified by the bodhisattva path through the imagery of seeds and fruit and of families (*kula*), and the language of substance and time. The other is a cosmology of paradox, best known through the formulation of the "Two Truths" or the identity and nonidentity of *saṃsāra* and nirvana. It is a cosmology of vision and light, a cosmology emphasizing structure and instantaneousness.[33] These two cosmologies provide much of the dynamic tension and creativity of Buddhism, as well as its adaptability. In the case of the Vajrayāna, the world of process stands in the same relationship to the world of paradox as *saṃsāra* stands to nirvana in the Two Truths. The quick path uses the imagery of the bodhisattva path, of seed and family, yet it collapses that imagery in the immanent ritual instant. Not surprisingly, an examination of Vajrayāna ritual based on these texts usually reveals marked recursiveness—the adept is first saved, then initiates others, who then save and ritually initiate yet others—in a process that wraps around on itself in a "strange loop."[34] Thus, the savior becomes the object of salvation in the process of ritual. The adept and those he seeks to exorcise/initiate become ritual clones of one another. All are suffering, all are saviors, in a ritual world where *saṃsāra* and nirvana collapse. This dual structure marks the Vajrayāna and most of its texts in China.

All Buddhist tantras are concerned with the construction of a ritual reality, a universe which emerges in the *sādhana* experience.[35] This is the heart of tantric practice. The purpose of the *sādhana* is the attainment of *siddhi* (*ch'eng-chiu*, transliterated as *hsi-ti*), the term literally meaning the attainment of a goal. The basis of *siddhi* is usually defined as the realization of the practitioner's identity with his "basic divinity."[36] When *siddhi* is considered from the perspective of ultimate enlightenment, *anuttarasamyaksambodhi*, then one refers to it simply as *siddhi* or more specifically as *lokottara siddhi* (*ch'u-shih ch'eng-chiu*, or *ch'eng-chiu hsi-ti*). When this attainment is considered from the perspective of the ritual manipulation of the conditioned universe it may be referred to as mundane *siddhi* (*laukika siddhi, shih-chien ch'eng-chiu*). Although *siddhi* is thus of "two types," an examination of ritual texts reveals that each attainment implies and requires the other.

The basic structure of the realization of *siddhi* is commonly expressed as some variant of the notion of the "union of opposites" or *yuganaddha*. *Yuganaddha* as a sexual union is the primary symbolism of the *Anuttarayogatantras*, the union being interpreted as the conjunction of wisdom (*prajñā*) and compassion (*karuṇā*) necessary for complete enlightenment.[37] Other conjunctions are also widespread, including that between the two *siddhis*, the body of the basic divinity and the body of the *ācārya*, and between the transcendence and mastery of the cosmos.

Characteristically, tantric *sādhanas* focus on the body of the adept as the primary locus for the realization of *yuganaddha*. The *sādhanas* are structured around notions such as the inner versus the outer cosmos, the human body and the divine body, the samsaric cosmos and the nirvanic cosmos. These relationships are established and manipulated through visualization, through the use of *mantra*, and through *nyāsa*.[38] All of these various interpretations and homologues of *yuganaddha* are explicitly correlated with the Two Truths.

In the performance of ritual, then, the attainment of *siddhi* is the realization of a soteriology in a "recursive" cosmos. The realization of one's basic divinity is the realization of one's own enlightenment and the simultaneous purification of one's world. As I will demonstrate below, the ritual expulsion and subduing of demons and epidemics is identical with the process of the elimination of *kleśas* and results in the attainment of enlightenment both by the demons and by the exorcist. Certain scholars of the Vajrayāna have begun to pay attention to this dual goal in "everyday" rites and practices. Stephan Beyer's *The Cult of Tārā* demonstrates this for Tibetan rites to Tārā, and the articles of William Stablein demonstrate the process in Newar healing rituals.[39] Indeed, the Vajrayāna's two kinds of *siddhi* may be considered the ritual realization of the Two Truths.

If we keep this dual purpose in mind and try to banish the notion that Chen-yen strives solely for an abstracted pursuit of enlightenment, then it is apparent why Chen-yen exists in China primarily in a series of esoteric yet popular rituals in which enlightenment is identified with "mundane" pursuits such as the healing of diseases, the expulsion of enemy armies or epidemics, and the salvation of ancestors and "hungry ghosts." It is, in large part, because of their overtly mundane aims that these rites have been classified as "miscellaneous," peripheral, popular, or somehow less than important by scholars of Shingon. The proliferation of such rites outside of established Vajrayāna lineages has been used to bolster the assertion that Buddhist esotericism was no more than an evanescent moment in China. I see these rites and their classic Vajrayāna structures as evidence of the real nature of Chen-yen, of its adaptive and assimilative power. To see the Vajrayāna in China, we must bracket our taxonomies of "pure" and "miscellaneous," of "lineage," of "elite" and "popular," and look carefully at these rites and at the contexts they inhabit.

Saving the hungry ghosts

Both Amoghavajra and his spiritual grandson Kūkai are plain about the role of Chen-yen: it is the one tradition which promises success both in the achievement of enlightenment and in the pursuit of worldly concerns.[40] Most Chen-yen applications combine both goals. A large proportion of Chen-yen works are ritual texts used to promote or to stop rain, to control heavenly phenomena, to exorcise illness and epidemics, to protect the state, or to aid in the salvation of beings in the hells or in other unfortunate places of rebirth.

The single most visible fact concerning Chinese religion from the Sung dynasty onward is that of rites for the dead. This is not the place to detail the variety of rites for the dead or the pre-T'ang rituals.[41] Rather, I will focus on the rituals for "hungry ghosts" (*eh-kuei*; Sanskrit, *pretas*) performed according to texts written in the generation or two after Amoghavajra and elaborated in rituals which permeated every corner of Chinese religion, including folk religion, Taoist ritual, and all versions of the modern-day *p'u-tu* (rites of "universal crossing" to salvation). The rites for hungry ghosts constitute the single most visible manifestation of the Vajrayāna in China, a fact which has seldom been remarked. Even Stephen Teiser's fine work, *The Ghost Festival in Medieval China*, does not deal with the central ritual texts of the Ghost Festival from the mid-T'ang onward.[42]

The folk celebration at whose heart is the Vajrayāna rite for the salvation of suffering beings is a prominent and colorful part of traditional Chinese life. On the evening of the thirtieth day of the sixth lunar month one walks the streets with care. For it is believed that on this night the gates of the underworld are thrown open; the boundaries between levels of the cosmos become permeable, and various ghosts or *kuei* are free to return to their lifetime haunts. This begins the *avalambana* festival, the *Yü-lan-p'en hui*, the "Festival of the Hungry Ghosts."

Celebrated in Taiwan, Hong Kong, Hawaii, Indonesia, and in other overseas Chinese communities as well as to a limited degree in the People's Republic of China and in Japan (*Bon*), the festivities, which may stretch out over the month, focus on the fifteenth day of the seventh month. The rite is second in stature only to the lunar New Year and encompasses a wide complex of rituals, including the nourishing, propitiation, and exhortation of wandering spirits and spirits in hell, merit making for oneself and one's ancestors, and the promotion of communal harmony and prosperity. These rites may be performed by Buddhist monks or by Taoist masters in remarkably look-alike rituals colloquially termed "Universal Crossings" (to salvation) or *P'u-tu*.[43]

Vegetarian feasts for ancestors and other dead have their roots in the communal feasts of Six Dynasties Taoism, in folk tradition, and in the pre-T'ang offerings to the samgha based on the story of Mulien's (Sanskrit, Maudgalyayana) attempts to save his mother from the *preta gati*. These celebrations became the occasion for new rites devised by Amoghavajra and his followers for the salvation of imperial ancestors.[44]

Soon, however, the new rites became independently circulating "techniques" transmitted outside of "proper" Chen-yen lineages. Unlike the situation during the High T'ang and in Japan, the norm in post-T'ang China is precisely that of individual texts and textual lineages which are collected by members of what are actually non-Vajrayāna (and even non-Buddhist) schools. These rites for the dead actually became the principle source of income for small hereditary temples, the most numerous kind of monastic institution.[45]

Scholars who have studied the Ghost Festival have tended to focus on the early Buddhist and Taoist festivals and on the popular story of Mu-lien, thereby avoiding the complicated Vajrayāna core of the rites.[46] Most who have remarked on the Vajrayāna foundation and performance of the rituals for hungry ghosts have noted the mechanical performance of the rites and the profit motive, as a way of discrediting any validity the rites might hold.[47] As I noted above, this reflects an essentialist bias toward ritual—a focus on the mental dimension of practice and the attainment of enlightenment as being more important than ritual action and mundane ends.

When we turn to the Buddhist canon or to commentaries and to iconographic collections of these rites we find that they are classified as "miscellaneous" tantra and relegated to the back of the collections. Rites for the protection of the state or the production of rain come soon after the root texts and their commentaries. This treatment by modern compilers reinforces the sense that these rites for the dead are quite peripheral, and perhaps even on the edge of orthodoxy.

It may come as a surprise, then, that the rites reveal close adherence to the Two Truths cosmology and to notions of *siddhi* found in the root texts. Indeed, the rites are based on ritual structures drawn from the *STTS* and have affinities to those found in the *Sarvadur-gatipariśodhana* and other performances found in the Indo-Tibetan tradition.[48] In others words, the rites for the salvation of hungry ghosts which are performed to this day are classic Vajrayāna rites.

Buddhist texts on hungry ghosts constitute eleven numbers in the *Taishō* edition of the Tripiṭaka. Eight of these are directly connected with the rites as practiced for the last eleven hundred years. The other three texts belong to a branch tradition concerning the "three *siddhi*s" which is interesting in its own right but quite distinct from the practice under consideration.[49] Numbers 1313, 1315, 1318, and 1319 are attributed to Amoghavajra. Number 1320, the text which is the basis of all rites from the Yüan dynasty onward, is sometimes attributed to Amoghavajra. Numbers 1314 and 1317 are attributed to Śikṣānanda. Number 1321 is by P'o-t'o-mu-a.

The crucial texts are 1319, *Origins of the Teachings Given to Ānanda concerning the Distribution of Food to the Burning Mouths from the Essentials of the Yoga-tantra* (*Yü-chia chi-yao yen-k'ou shih-shih ch'i-chiao A-nan-to yüan-yu*) and 1320, *Rites for Distributing Food to the Burning Mouths from the Essentials of the Yogatantra* (*Yü-chia chi-yao yen-k'ou shih-shih i* [*YCYK*]). Attributed to Amoghavajra, they may date from his circle and from the circle

around the next generation of disciples.[50] Texts 1313 and 1318 are nearly identical with the first half of 1319. The story presented in these texts concerns the plight of the ever hapless Ānanda.

The story may be summarized as follows. Once, while the Buddha and the great assembly of Bodhisattvas were convened during the annual rain retreat Ānanda was off by himself, meditating in his hut. During the third watch of the night, a *preta* named "Burning Mouth" (*Yen-k'ou*) appeared to him. This frightful apparition informed the shaken Ānanda that his human life was ending; three days hence he too would be reborn in the *preta* realm. Ānanda inquired of Burning Mouth if there was some way to avoid this fate. Burning Mouth replied that if Ānanda were to give one Maghada bushel of food and drink to each of the one hundred thousand *nayuta*s of *preta*s and other beings he would avoid this calamity, have a long life, and Burning Mouth and other suffering beings would be reborn in a heaven or in a pure land.

Ānanda, weeping, took his plight to the Buddha, who told of a rite and a *dhāraṇī* method he had been taught in a past life when he was a Brahmin living in Avalokiteśvara's pure land. It is called "The Method of the *Dhāraṇī* of the Tathāgata of Limitless Majestic Virtue and Self-Existent Brilliance." The Buddha then describes the rite which includes offerings to the samgha.[51]

Texts 1318 and 1319 then outline the ritual use of the *dhāraṇī*.[52] The *Rites for Distributing Food to the Burning Mouths from the Essentials of the Yoga-tantra* (1320) gives full ritual instructions for the rite, and it is this text which I will outline below.[53] The rite may be divided into ten sections and an appendix:

1 Preliminaries, invitation, worship of worthies by the *ācārya*. This includes preparation of the site for the altar, the invitation of the Buddhas of the ten directions, the visualization of the Maṇḍala for the rite, and the worship of the divinities by the *ācārya*.[54]
2 The *ācārya* generates himself as Kuan Tzu-tzai (Avalokiteśvara). The adept closes his eyes and visualizes in his own body a clear and pure lunar disk in the heart. "Shining brightly on the disk is a *Hrīḥ bija* which transforms into an eight-petaled lotus. On this lotus throne is Kuan-tzu-tzai. . . . The Bodhisattva thinks: 'each being has this flower of enlightenment. The pure Dharmadhātu is without stain. . . .' One then visualizes this eight-petaled lotus gradually expanding to fill up limitless space and thinks, 'May this flower of enlightenment illuminate the assembled ocean of Tathāgathas. One [thinks] desiring to complete the great offering, if my mind is steady then limitless creatures will arouse compassion. Like this enlightenment blossom's light all suffering beings are completely free [of stain], just as is Kuan Yin.' " The flower vision now shrinks gradually into the adept's own body. He makes the Kuan-tzu-tzai *mudrā/adhiṣṭhāna* at the four places: the heart, shoulders, throat, and top of the head. At each place the *mudrā* touches there appears a *Hrīḥ*. He then recites the Mantra: *Om vajra dharma hrīḥ*, and his body becomes that of Kuan-tzu-tzai.[55]

3 Visualization of smashing the gates of hell (in the guise of Titsang; Sanskrit, Kṣitigarba) and the invitation of ghosts and spirits from the various *gatis* (realms of existence).[56] Making the Vajra-fist the adept advances visualizing the opening of hell and chanting the hell-smashing spell. A fiery light streams from the *mudrā*, and from his mouth there comes a fiery brilliance. The adept visualizes a red *Hrīḥ* shining with a red brilliance on the lunar disk in his heart. The three lights together illuminate the Avīci hell. As the adept chants the mantra three times, all of the locks on the gates of hell loosen and open, and everyone with crimes comes out. (He may then proceed to the other five *gatis*.) He recalls the vows of Ti-tsang not to attain Buddhahood until hell has been emptied, and he invites the beings to come to this *dharma* assembly. Moving to the next *gati* he makes the *mudrā* of summoning the *pretas* and chants the appropriate mantra. Visualizing himself as Kuan-tzu-tzai, the adept sees a red *Hrīḥ* on the lunar disk in his heart and its light illuminates these sinful beings. The adept thus traces the descent of Avalokiteśvara through the various *gatis*, moving on the altar from the east gate to the south gate (hells), to the southwest gate (*pretas*), to the west gate (animals), to the northwest (humans), to the north (*asuras*), and finally to the east (*devas*).[57]

4 Summoning, fixing, and elimination of obstructions and bad karma. This sequence of meditations and ritual actions is aimed at alleviating the karmic effects of past deeds for the now assembled beings of the cosmos. The crimes are "summoned" or evoked in a process in which a brilliant white hook produced of a white *Hrīḥ* syllable amasses the crimes of beings in the three lower *gatis* into a black mist which takes the shape of various demons. The crimes are then "destroyed" in a meditation involving a four-faced version of Avalokiteśvara through the light of a black *Hrīḥ*. Referring to the *Sarvatathāgatatattvasaṃgraha*, the text says one takes on the body of Trilokyavijaya. This technique eliminates karma which has not yet been "fixed." The karma is then "fixed" and "extinguished."[58]

5 Feeding the ghosts with "Sweet Dew"—*Bodhicitta*. This sequence has two parts. First the adept makes the *mudrā* and recites the mantra of the Tathāgata of Wonderful Body Who Distributes Sweet Dew (Kanlu; Sanskrit, *amṛta, bodhicitta*). The visualization involves a *Vam* syllable indicative of Mahāvairocana of the *Vajradhātu maṇ-ḍala* and the imagery of Prajñā-wisdom sweet dew water falling like refreshing rain on all the assembled beings. In the second part of the sequence the adept makes the *mudrā* of "opening the throats" and the *mudrā* of the Tathāgata of Expansive Spirit. Visualizing a white *A* syllable indicative of Mahāvairocana of the *Garbhakośadhātu maṇ-ḍala*, in his left hand, the adept opens his hand like an opening lotus blossom. So too, the throats of the assembled beings are visualized as opening.[59]

6 Recitation of the names of the seven Tathāgatas. The Buddhas are: Precious Conquerer (Pao-sheng ju-lai, identified with Ratnasaṁbhava); Bestower of

Fearlessness (Li pu-wei ju-lai, Abhayaṁdada); Wide and Vast Body (Kuang-po shen ju-lai, Vyasakaya); the Tathagata of Wonderful Body (Miao-ssu shen ju-lai, Surupakaya); Many Treasures (Tuo-pao ju-lai, Prabhutaratna); Amitabha (A-mituo ju-lai); and the Tathāgata in the World of Broad and Majestic Virtue of Self-existent Light (Shih-chien kuang-ta wei-te tzu-tzai kuang-ming).

The mantra of each is chanted, and the text follows with an explanation of the benefit produced. For example, hearing and chanting the name of Abhayaṁdada results in always attaining peace and joy. Hearing the name of the Tathāgata in the World of Broad and Majestic Virtue of Self-existent Light produces five separate results, including the attainment of the great self-sufficient *ju-i*, the ability to fly through the air, as well as a body and mind like a pearl.[60]

7 The initiation of the assembly of beings, including their arousal of *bodhicitta*, and their taking of *samaya* vows. This sequence involves the formal initiation (through visualization) of the amassed beings into the Vajrayāna. The beings are visualized as taking refuge, arousing *bodhicitta*, taking bodhisattva vows, and receiving *samaya*.[61]

8 The initiated beings now save and feed other beings.[62] The newly initiated beings, under the leadership of the adept, now make the *mudrā* and mantra (and, one supposes the visualization) of the Tathāgata of Limitless Majestic Virtue of Self-existent Light. Thus, in this sequence, the adept and all the assembled beings now feed all beings with a nourishing sea of sweet dew.

9 The *dhāraṇīs* of dismissal. The adept makes the *mudrā* and mantra appropriate to Bestowing Presents and then the long *Dhāraṇā* of the Victorious and Worthy Buddha's *Uṣṇīṣa*.[63]

10 Closing *gāthas*. Finally, the adept recites a series of *gāthas*, ending with the one-hundred-syllable mantra of Vajrasattva, and the beings are dismissed. The full series includes *gāthas* for: (*a*) each of the six *gatis*, (*b*) arousing complete conversion, (*c*) great fortune—going to the pure lands, and (*d*) one-hundred-syllable *dhāraṇī* of Vajrasattva.[64] Appended to the manual is "The writ on the 10 sorts of lonely *hun* [spirits]."[65]

This brief examination of the rites for the salvation of hungry ghosts shows that, as in the root texts, one can observe the Two Truths cosmology and the interlocking pursuit of two kinds of *siddhi*. The mundane *siddhi* which is achieved in the rite is the salvation of the *pretas* and other suffering beings and the effective exorcism of these troubling spirits from the community. The route for accomplishing this cosmic housecleaning is the promotion of supramundane *siddhi*. First the adept and then the suffering beings are purged of their *kleśa*, after which they achieve the arousal of *bodhi*, the initiation into the *maṇḍala*, and enlightenment. The two kinds of *siddhi* and their attainment are intertwined, a fact underscored by the once-suffering beings, who, acting as bodhisattvas, proceed to lead other beings through the rite. The universe becomes filled with

the suffering who become saviors who make offerings to those who saved them, and so on.

Thus, enlightenment, the fully initiated *ācārya*, and the world of suffering and those beings in it form a "strange loop," and like the Two Truths, are both identical and not identical in the process of ritual action. Such "application" of Vajrayāna principles, far from being "degraded," is precisely what the Vajrayāna is all about.

The maṇḍala without precedent

At the opposite end of the spectrum from the popularly dispersed rites for hungry ghosts is another Chen-yen phenomenon which is perhaps more widespread and just as "invisible." The *maṇḍalas* of esoteric Buddhism, particularly the *Garbhakośadhātu maṇḍala* largely derived from the *Mahāvairocana Sūtra*, and the *Vajradhātu maṇḍala* based on the *Sarvatathāgatatattva-saṃgraha* belong to the esoteric and "elite" realm, and their relationship to eighth-century China is problematic. Yet there are no two pieces of graphic art which have enjoyed wider distribution and greater influence in East, Central, and Southeast Asia. The *Vajradhātu maṇḍala*, derived from the *STTS*, is particularly widespread. It appears in monuments such as Chandi Sewu in Java, in Tibetan temples, and in numerous painted reproductions, not to mention its structural clones in hundreds of ritual *maṇḍalas* for rites such as that described above.

The problem, stated succinctly, is where certain features of these *maṇḍalas* came from. Obviously, the *maṇḍalas* are derived from constructions described in the texts. They are therefore "Indian," Chinese style notwithstanding. But the actual paintings do not wholly agree with the textual descriptions, and, in the case of the *Vajradhātu maṇḍala* derived from the *STTS*, there is a great degree of difference: The *maṇḍala* is commonly arranged as a composite of nine separate *maṇḍalas* in a three-by-three square. The text of the *STTS* presents a series of four sets of six *maṇḍalas* in a fashion typical of *Vajrayāna* ritual texts. The *maṇḍalas* are integrated vertically in the text through their identical structural principles. But during the last half of the eighth century a standard *Vajradhātu maṇḍala* emerged. This *maṇḍala* is based on the *Mahā-maṇḍala* partially described in both the texts of Amoghavajra and of Vajrabodhi. The *Mahā-maṇḍala* is constituted by a central court surrounded by eight other courts. The first six courts beginning with the central court are drawn from the first segment of the *Sarvatathāgatatattvasaṃgraha*, the seventh is said to be drawn from the second segment, while the two last courts are drawn from later sections of the text.[66]

This odd configuration is ascribed to East Asian interpretation, particularly in the person of Kūkai, the founder of Japanese Shingon Buddhism, or, at most, to his Chinese teacher Hui-kuo. Recent work on the topic has sought explanation for the strange configuration in Indo-Tibetan exegetical categories.

Ninefold configurations may indeed be derived from the Indo-Tibetan tradi-

tion, but one must do some theoretical acrobatics to justify such interpretations. There are sixfold versions of the *maṇḍala*, and Śubhākarasiṃha's *Wu-pu shin-kuan* presents one such arrangement.[67] The innovation is usually ascribed to Hui-kuo (the "one moment" of Chinese Vajrayāna) and to Kūkai and left at that. Indeed, one gets the distinct impression from the literature on the topic that the ninefold arrangement was a natural outgrowth of Vajrayāna principles and Japanese genius. With the exception of the fleeting influence of Hui-kuo, the entire topic of Chinese influence is quietly tabled. But if it was Hui-kuo, what could have inspired him to produce the ninefold *Vajradhātu maṇḍala*?

Let us put aside the orthodox history of Chen-yen given us by the Shingon tradition and ask, Is there any Chinese conception, model, or idea which could have led to this ninefold *maṇḍala*? There is indeed. It is the "*lo-shu*" of Taoism—the magic square of nine—and the imperial Taoist cult of T'ai-i which flourished at precisely the same time as did the Chen-yen *ācāryas*.

First, it is important to understand that the Chen-yen *ācāryas* may be said to have continued and improved upon the centuries-old technique of "matching meanings" (*ko-i*).[68] Established as a technique of translation in the early Six Dynasties, *ko-i* brought together indigenous Chinese terms and notions in the service of communicating Indian Buddhist ideas. Though *ko-i* effectively ended as a rigid means of translating with the advent of Kumārajīva, it remained a hermeneutic reality on a number of levels. The Chen-yen *ācāryas*, and particularly the sinofied Amoghavajra and his immediate Chinese disciples, raised this technique to an art not only in using particular terms from the Chinese milieu but also in the adaptation of general principles.

Foremost among the principles which Amoghavajra made use of was the notion of the transformative virtue of the ideal Confucian sage-king. The notion of transformative virtue is widespread in Amoghavajra's rites and correspondence, and in that of his disciples. The *ācāryas* used traditional Chinese mythology, speculation, and ritual practice surrounding the sage-king. They could not have missed the significance of the cult of T'ai-i and related cosmological diagrams which have come to be associated with the *Lo-shu* and the *Ho-t'u*.[69]

During the Han (B.C.E. 206–20) and Six Dynasties (220–589) numerological, prognosticatory, and cosmological speculation coalesced to form the structural principles for a wide-ranging cosmological system based on the five activities (*wu hsing*) and their disposition in nine "palaces" or "courts" (*chiu kung*). In these speculations the universe is envisioned as a square of three-by-three or nine "palaces," the central palace representing the emperor while the outer palaces represent the nine provinces of the empire. The lord of the central palace is T'ai-i, the "Great Monad" or "unity." Through numerological speculation and the use of homology one could divine the orderly processes and transformations of the natural world, the alternation of yin and yang, and the cyclic transformations of the five "activities" and the five seasons.

By the time of Han Wu-Ti (B.C.E. 140–87), T'ai-i had been homologized to the sovereign in the palace of the pole star who ruled the eight other sectors of

the heavens. In later centuries the earthly emperor was equated with this heavenly ruler. It was thought that the emperor, as the ruler of the nine courts, should circulate from one court to another in imitation of the transformative process of the universe. By adhering to the proper ritual activity, the color of garments, etc., the emperor could bring himself into harmony with the transformations of the cosmic order and in turn this virtuous behavior could influence these transformative processes for the good of the empire. This notion found expression in discussions of a *Ming-T'ang* or "Bright Hall," a cosmic palace modeled on the T'ai-i numerology and in which the emperor "circulated," performing rituals according to the season. Few were the emperors who actually built a *Ming-t'ang*, though the notion of such a cosmic palace was entertained in most reigns.[70]

Nonetheless, speculation led to the actual construction of such edifices down through Chinese history, and a cult of T'ai-i was active during the time of Hsüan-Tsung and Amoghavajra when nine thrones were set up and the various stellar lords were "circulated" each year.[71] Moreover, it now appears that a key Taoist initiation rite made extensive use of this nonary or ninefold configuration.[72]

It is not too difficult to imagine the Vajrayāna masters putting these indigenous and familiar structures to good use. I propose that the arrangement of the *Vajradhātu maṇḍala* may have been a case of "*ko-i*." The lack of any obvious precedent in the Vajrayāna and the presence of the T'ai-i cult and its diagram are evidence enough to make T'ai-i a primary suspect. The *Vajradhātu maṇḍala* of the Chenyen school cannot be accidentally related to the cult of T'ai-i, which was an active concern of many people whom Amoghavajra and Hui-kuo knew. It is only traditional biases which have rendered this structural similarity invisible and beyond the realm of reasonable investigation.

Seeing the Vajrayāna in China: closing remarks

As we look at the Vajrayāna in China, several avenues for research are open. Despite previous emphasis on the root texts, they are still in need of intensive study. So too, the various contexts of "applied" Chen-yen need to be explored, and these are social, political, symbolic, etc. To give but one example, let us probe the connections surrounding the imagery of the fire in South and East Asia. Initial work has been done here—for example, the articles contained in Fritz Staal's *Agni* and in Richard Payne's dissertation on *homa* rites.[73] But what of the imagery of the fire as recreating the cosmos/dharma? How is the feeding of such fires symbolically related to ancestral complexes, to *pretas* (here, literally "flaming mouths"), and to the feeding of the monks? Is it not remarkable that the chief and most visible aspect of Buddhism in China came to be associated with these rites and with the dual feeding of "wandering fires"—*pretas* and ascetic monks?

A careful study remains to be done on the connection between the Buddhist

and Taoist performances of the *P'u-tu* rites. John Lagerwey quotes a Taoist master as asserting the identity of the rites.[74] I have watched the simultaneous performance of these rites in Hong Kong, and I too noted the similarities. Yet the rites are not the same. While it is apparent that the *P'u-tu* rites contained in Lin Ling-chen's and Ning Ch'uan-chen's *Hsüan-tu ta-hsien yü-shan ching-kung i* in outline resemble the *Yü-chia chi-yao yen-k'ou shih-shih i*, the meditations, visualizations, and cosmology are strikingly different.[75]

And then, what of the men and women who, during the ghost festival, burn "hell-money" on the streets of Hong Kong? Should we restrict our researches only to those "orthodox" manifestations of the Vajrayāna? I think not.

Jacques Gernet has said that "the death of Amoghavajra in 774 symbolizes in its way the end of the Chinese middle ages."[76] I will put it this way: the rise of Amoghavajra and the dissemination and assimilation of Vajrayāna rites signal the beginning of modern Chinese religion. It is time we return Chen-yen to the place it has actually occupied in Chinese religions and in the Vajrayāna. We must begin to see Chen-yen.

Notes

An earlier version of this article was presented in the panel "Historical Explorations of the Diamond Path" at the Association of Asian Studies in San Francisco, April 1988. For Chinese characters, see fig. 1.

* Author's 2005 note: It is a humbling experience to revisit an article written fifteen years ago, and there are many things one is tempted to reconsider and revise. Chief among them would be a more problematized application of the terms Vajrayāna, Chen-yen, Esoteric Buddhism, and tantra. Nonetheless, the main thesis — that the impact of esoteric texts, rituals, and hermeneutics on T'ang and Sung religion has been under studied and under represented, and that sectarian scholarship played a key role in creating and perpetuating this situation — remains valid. For more recent work on the topic the reader should consult my *Politics and Transcendent Wisdom* (1998), Michel Strickmann's *Mantras et Mandarins* (1996), and *Chinese Magical Medicine* (2002), as well as Appendix A of Robert Sharf's *Coming to Terms with Chinese Buddhism* (2002), and my review of the same in *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* (2005).

1 Quoted in Yoshito S. Hakeda, Kūkai: Major Texts (New York: Columbia University Press, 1978), pp. 31–32. Original in *Kōbō daishi zenshū*, comp. and ed. Center of Mikkyō Cultural Study of Kōyasan University, 3d printing with additions (Tokyo: Yoshikawa kōbunkan, 1965), 1:99.

2 Several fine works on Shingon promote this view of Chen-yen or remain bound by the sectarian categories of "pure" (*tun mi*) and "miscellaneous" (*tsa mi*). See, e.g., Minoru Kiyota, *Shingon Buddhism* (Tokyo and Los Angeles: Buddhist Books International, 1978); Tajima Ryūjun, *Les deux grandes maṇḍalas et la doctrine d'esoterism Shingon* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1959), and also his *Étude sur le Mahāvairocana Sūtra* (*Dainichikyo*) (Paris: Adrien Maisonneuvre, 1936); Ōmura Seigai, *Mikkyō Hattatsu-shi*, 5 vols. (Tokyo, 1918, reprint, 1972); Matsunaga Yūkei, *Mikkyō no rekishi* (Kyoto: Heiraku-ji shoten, 1969), and his "Tantric Buddhism and Shingon Buddhism," *Eastern Buddhist* 2 (November 1969): 1–14; and Osabe Kazuo's *Tōdai mikkyōshi zakkō* (Kobe: Kōbe Shōka Daigaku Gakujutsu Kenkyūkai,

1971), and *Tō Sō mikkyōshi ronko* (Kyoto, 1982). Texts spoken by Mahāvairocana are "Pure."

3 Tsuda Shin'ichi, "The Hermeneutics of Kūkai," *Acta Asiatica: Bulletin of the Institute of Eastern Culture* 47 (1985): 86.

4 As, e.g., in Hakeda, Kiyota, and Matsunaga. For a summary of the debate on just when "pure" Shingon and the two-*maṇḍala* system appeared, see Lokesh Chandra, *The Esoteric Iconography of Japanese Maṇḍalas*, Satapitaka Series no. 92 (New Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture, 1971).

5 Iyanaga Nobumi summarizes the evidence for all three *ācāryas* having the *Sarvatathāgatatattvasaṃgraha* (*STTS*) in his masterful "Recits de la soumission de Maheśvara par Trilokyavijaya d'après les sources Chinoises et Japonaises," in *Tantric and Taoist Studies in Honor of R. A. Stein*, vol. 3, ed. Michel Strickmann, Mélanges Chinois et Bouddhiques, vol. 22 (Brussels: Institut Belge des Hautes Etudes Chinoises, 1985), pp. 706–7, n. 143. The transmission of these texts is quite complicated, particularly in the case of the *STTS*. For the *Mahāvairocana Sūtra* (*MVS*), see Tajima, *Étude sur le Mahāvairocana-Sūtra* (*Dainichikyo*), and lyanaga's "Liste des abreviations (Bibliographie commentee)," contained in his "Recits de la soumission de Maheśvara," pp. 649–55. For the *STTS*, see David L. Snellgrove's introduction to Lokesh Chandra and D. L. Snellgrove, *Sarva-Tathāgatha-Tattva-Saṅgraha*, Śata-Piṭaka Series, vol. 269 (New Delhi: Mrs. Sharada Rani, 1981), pp. 5–67, and Iyanaga, "Liste des abreviations," 656–57.

6 See *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* (The *Taishō* canon in Chinese, hereafter T.), T. 2120:52, *Tai-tsung ch'ao tseng ssu-k'ung ta-pien cheng kuang-chih san-tsang ho-shang piao chih-chi* (The collected documents relating to the monk Pu-k'ung of Tai-tsung's reign), comp. Amoghavajra's disciple Yüan-chao. In 844a28–29 Amoghavajra specifically speaks of his most advanced disciples, all of whom he has fully initiated into the "Yoga of the Five Divisions," or that of the *STTS*. Elsewhere, such as in the *Tou-pu t'o-lo-ni mu* (T. 903 898c–900a) attributed to Amoghavajra, but probably the work of a disciple, both traditions are mentioned, and yet other disciples such as his biographer Chiao Ch'ien make pointed reference to Amoghavajra's teachings as being comprised of the *STTS and* "the method of setting up the *maṇḍala* according to the *Mahakārunagarbhamaṇḍala* of the *Mahāvairocana Sūtra*" (see T. 2056, 292c5ff, and 283a6–9). For Hui-lang, see T. 2120:52.850c12–15, 851a9–852b6, etc. Some Japanese scholars, such as Ono Gemmyo, have argued on the basis of *maṇḍala* iconography that Amoghavajra is the author of the pure "dual *maṇḍala*" tradition; see Chandra, p. 37.

7 See Hakeda, p. 149. Various "reconstructed lineage trees" are available in *Mikkyō daijiten*, 6:1–32, rev. and enlarged ed. in 6 vols. (Kyoto: Hōzōkan, 1970; originally published in 3 vols., 1931–33).

8 Interestingly, Shingon scholars present this picture alongside that of the supernormal Kūkai who learned the tradition in six months; see Hakeda, pp. 62–76.

9 One exception is Chou I-liang's monograph-size article, "Tantrism in China," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 8 (March 1945): 241–332; another is Raoul Birnbaum's work, including his "Introduction to the Study of T'ang Buddhist Astrology," *Bulletin of the Society for the Study of Chinese Religions* 8 (Fall 1980): 5–19, and his *Studies on the Mysteries of Mañjuśrī* (Boulder: Society for the Study of Chinese Religions, 1983).

10 An interesting example is the superb work of Osabe Kazuo (n. 2 above). Osabe, unlike most Japanese scholars of Shingon and Chen-yen, spends a great deal of effort on what amounts to "miscellaneous" tantra and in doing so recognizes its tremendous importance and the importance of Chen-yen's relationship to Chinese folk and Taoist traditions. Yet he still uses the categories of pure and miscellaneous.

11 It is noteworthy that Korea has been almost totally overlooked in this regard.

12 While earlier scholars, such as Tajima Ryūjun, Ōmura Seigai, and Toganoo Shōun used comparative Vajrayāna materials, it is only in the last fifteen to twenty years that the Indo-Tibetan Vajrayāna tradition has become a major context for the exploration of East Asian Vajrayāna. *Comparative Iconography of the Vajradhātumaṇḍala and the Tattva-saṅgraha* by Dr. Mrs. Shashibala, Śata-piṭaka Series, vol. 344 (New Delhi: Mrs. Sharada Rani, 1986) presents a summary of much Japanese scholarship relevant to the Indo-Tibetan context of the *STTS* and its *maṇḍalas*. But most encouraging is the work coming out of the French school—R. A. Stein and his students (see below, nn. 14 and 15).

13 While such investigations can be useful for heuristic purposes, we should be careful in finding the key to all East Asian Vajrayāna in Indo-Tibetan doctrinal constructs. See, e.g., Shashibala, pp. 24–25, where the reason for the ninefold schema of the East Asian Vajradhātu *maṇḍala* is found in the "Tibetan taxonomy and topical analysis of the tantras" as being the six sub-maṇḍalas of the *STTS* with "the seventh maṇḍala representing the exegesis from the prajñā standpoint and the eighth and the ninth maṇḍalas betoken[ing] the upāya viewpoint." Not only is such an analysis possible both in East Asian and in Indo-Tibetan traditions, but it ignores possible and obvious influences from Chinese religions.

14 For the best of the French school, see Michel Strickmann, ed., *Tantric and Taoist Studies in Honor of R. A. Stein*, vols. 1–3 which constitutes vols. 20–23 of Mélanges Chinois et Bouddhiques (Brussels: Institut Belge des Hautes Etudes Chinoises, 1981, 1983, 1985); vol. 23 is forthcoming.

15 These are mostly brief reports found in *Annuaire de l'Ecole pratique des Hautes Etudes, Section des Sciences Religieuses*, and *Annuaire du Collège de France*, especially from 1973 to 1981. The situation is beginning to change with the publication of *Tantric and Taoist Studies* (n. 14 above) and with the ongoing work of *Hōbōgirin*: see lyanaga, "Recits" (n. 5 above), p. 646.

16 I am referring to Kiyota (n. 2 above). Yamasaki Taiko, *Shingon: Japanese Esoteric Buddhism*, trans. and adapted by Richard Peterson and Cynthis Peterson, ed. Yasuyoshi Morimoto and David Kidd (Boston: Shambala, 1988) contains what is by far the most careful portrayal of the development of the Chen-yen school in China that is available in English, though it too ignores recent work by French sinologists and gives a largely orthodox presentation of the Shingon school.

17 Typical of such judgments is that of Liu Hsu, the compiler of *Chiu T'ang shu* (*CTS*), "Most of the fertile land and much of the wealth in the capital region passed to the Buddhist monasteries and Taoist temples, and the officials were powerless to control the Buddhist clergy. Tai-tsung's faith in Buddhism remained unshaken even in the face of recurrent corruption, rebellion, and military defeats"; *CTS* 118, p. 3417, quoted in Stanley Weinstein, *Buddhism under the Tang* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p. 89.

18 Kenneth Ch'en, *Buddhism in China: A Historical Survey* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1964), pp. 213–40, 389–408.

19 Ibid., p. 389.

20 Ibid., pp. 336–37. For similar appraisals, see Arthur F. Wright, *Buddhism in Chinese History* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1970), pp. 86–127.

21 Weinstein, *Buddhism under the T'ang*, p. 63.

22 It was fortuitous for the Chen-yen masters that they appeared at the court in the early to mid-T'ang. Until the reunification of North and South under the Sui, there had been two disparate emphases in Chinese Buddhism. Buddhism in the South was dominated by intellectuals. It was literate and aimed at the acquisition of insight. Buddhism in the North, under the non-Han rulers, emphasized the pragmatic benefits of healing,

prognostication, and in general the supernormal powers of monks such as Fo T'u-teng. The T'ang ruling family united the two cultures and provided precisely the right climate for Chen-yen, which likewise united the pursuit of enlightenment and the transformative activity in the world. For the split between Northern and Southern Buddhism, see Ch'en, *Buddhism in China*, pp. 121–212. For the wonder worker Fo T'u-teng, see Arthur Wright. "Fo-T'u-Teng: A Biography," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 11 (1948): 321–71.

23 A partial list of Amoghavajra's circle includes emperors: Hsüan-tsung, Su-tsung, Tai-tsung; imperial family: Tu-ku Kuei-fei (queen), Prince of Han (son of previous queen), Princess Hua-yang (queen's daughter, Amoghavajra's adopted daughter); government officials; Liu Chu-lin (governor general of Ling-nan-tao; Chou [n. 9 above], pp. 288–89, n. 22), Ko-shu Han (military governor general, Chou, p. 294, n. 46, *CTS* 104, 10a–14b), Li Yüan-tsung (commissioner of religious affairs), Li Fu-kuo (Chou, p. 295, *CTS* 184.7a–9b), Wang Chin (prime minister, Chou, p. 296, n. 61, *CTS* 118.10), Li Hsien-ch'eng (eunuch), Liu Hsien-ho (eunuch), Yen Ying (censor general), Yü Ch'ao-en (eunuch, commander of the imperial army), Yüan Tsai (prime minister, Chou, p. 330, app. S, *CTS* 118. 1a–6b); monks: Fei-hsi, Vajrabodhi, Han-kuang (T. 50.879c), Hui-pien, Li-yen (Kuchean monk), Ch'ien-chen (Chou, p. 298, n. 67, T. 50.736b–737a), Hui-lang (Chou, p. 301, n. 85), Yüan-chiao, Hui-chao, Hui-kuo, Chueh-ch'ao, Liangpen, Tzu-lin, Li-yen, Hui-lin; lay disciples: Chao Ch'ien (literary councillor to the emperor (Chou, p. 300, n. 79); Taoists: Lo Kung-yüan; literati: Hsu Hao (calligrapher).

24 Ōmura (n. 2 above), 5:835–99, for Japanese pilgrims and the T'ang/Sung transmission. There is a brief notice of Tendai pilgrims to Chinese masters in later times in Ui Hakuju, "A Study of Japanese Tendai Buddhism," *Philosophical Studies of Japan* 1 (1959): 33–74.

25 Yet when this happened is unclear. Tsan-ning, writing during the Sung, says everyone knows the lineage; see Chou (n. 9 above), p. 306.

26 Ch'en, p. 337, ends his account of the school thus. He is citing Chou, p. 284. Ch'en has modified Chou's translation slightly; I have restored its original phrasing.

27 Some Buddhist scholars are the worst in this regard. See, e.g., Edward Conze's *Buddhist Thought in India* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1967), pp. 270–74.

28 David L. Snellgrove, *Indo-Tibetan Buddhism: Indian Buddhists and Their Tibetan Successors*, 2 vols. (Boston: Shambala, 1987), 1:160; also see p. 238 on *siddhis*. Also excellent is Stephan Beyer's *The Cult of Tārā: Magic and Ritual in Tibet* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973), and the work of Giuseppe Tucci, especially his "The Religious Ideas: The Vajrayāna," in Virginia Vacca, trans., *Tibetan Painted Scrolls*, 2 vols. (Rome: Libreria Dello Stato, 1949), 1:209–49.

29 Snellgrove, *Indo-Tibetan Buddhism*, 1:235–36.

30 T. 2120:52.840b1–12.

31 See Michel Strickmann, "Homa in East Asia," in *Agni*, ed. Fritz Staal, 2 vols. (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1982), 2:418–55.

32 T. 848 and 865, respectively. The best source on the *Sarvatathāgatatattva-saṅgraha* (T. 865 and 866) is David L. Snellgrove's introduction to *Sarva-Tathāgata-Tattva-Saṅgraha* (n. 5 above). One should note that Shingon references to the *STTS* are usually references to Amoghavajra's text (865), though references to Vajrabodhi's text (866) and a host of commentaries is not uncommon. The "translations" of the *STTS* by Amoghavajra and Vajrabodhi are really more like notes on the text. The first complete translation of the *STTS* was by Shih-hu in 1002. The *STTS* is perhaps more accurately described for East Asian Vajrayāna as a "cycle." See Iyanaga (n. 5 above). For the *Mahāvairocana Sūtra*, see Tajima, *Étude* (n. 2 above). A major branch of the Chen-yen school developed with the rise in importance of the *Susiddhikara* (T. 893:

18) in the late T'ang. This text was seen as a third, integrating principle uniting the *MVS* and the *STTS*. For these developments, see R. Misaki, "On the Thought of Susiddhi in the Esoteric Buddhism of the Late T'ang Dynasty," in *Studies of Esoteric Buddhism and Tantrism in Commemoration of the 1,150th Anniversary of the Founding of Kōyasan* (Koyasan: Kōyasan University Press, 1965), pp. 255–81.

33 For the two types of cosmology, see Randolf Kloetzli, *Buddhist Cosmology* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1983); and Charles D. Orzech, "Cosmology in Action: Recursive Cosmology, Soteriology, and Authority in *Chen-yen* Buddhism with Special Reference to the Monk Pu-k'ung" (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1986). Traditional scholarship has repeatedly tried to pigeonhole each of these texts as predominantly Yogācāra or Mādhyamika. These efforts might serve some heuristic purpose but, as is the case with any text which is self-consciously synthetic, they admit of many interpretations and affiliations.

34 For a discussion of the doctrine of the Two Truths, see Junjirō Takakusu, *The Essentials of Buddhist Philosophy* (Honolulu, 1947; reprint, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1978), pp. 99–111; Fredrick J. Streng, *Emptiness: A Study in Religious Meaning* (New York: Abingdon, 1967); and Mervyn Sprung, ed., *The Problem of Two Truths in Buddhism and Vedanta* (Dordrecht: Reidel, 1973). The problem of the Two Truths in Buddhism is reminiscent of certain problems in mathematics and physics concerning recursivity and what Douglas Hofstadter calls "strange Loops"; see Douglas R. Hofstadter, *Godel, Escher, Bach: An Eternal Golden Braid* (New York: Vintage, 1980).

35 On the *sādhana* and its importance, see Agehananda Bharati, *The Tantric Tradition* (New York: Rider, 1965), pp. 13–17, 228–78; and Sanjukta Gupta, "Tantric Sādhana: Pūjā," in Sanjukta Gupta, Dirk Jan Hoens, and Teun Goudriaan, *Hindu Tantrism* (Leiden: Brill, 1979).

36 Jeffrey Hopkins describes this process as "approximation" in his translation of Tsong-ka-pa's *The Great Exposition of Secret Mantra: The Yoga of Tibet* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1981), in the exposition of "Performance Tantra" (*carya tantra*) which is primarily about the *Sarvatathāgatatattvasaṃgraha*; see esp. pp. 185–88. When full *siddhi* is achieved the approximation becomes an *icon* (my term) or *samaya*.

37 A lot has been written on the topic, but good accounts are by Mircea Eliade, *Yoga: Immortality and Freedom*, trans. Willard R. Trask (New York, 1964; reprint, Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1972), pp. 267–73; Bharati, pp. 199–227; Shasi Bushan Dasgupta, *An Introduction to Tantric Buddhism* (Calcutta, 1958; reprint, Berkeley: Shambala, 1974), pp. 113–21. See also Herbert Guenther, *Yuganaddha: The Tantric View of Life*, 2d ed. (Varanasi: Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series Office, 1964).

38 On *nyāsa* (the localization of divine powers in the body), see Bharati, pp. 273–74; Eliade, pp. 210–11; and the *Mahāvairocana Sūtra*, T. 848:18.22a–22b, 38b–38c.

39 Beyer (n. 28 above); William Stablien, "A Descriptive Analysis of the Content of Nepalese Buddhist *Pūjās* as a Medical-Cultural System with Reference to Tibetan Parallels," in *In the Realm of the Extra-Human: Ideas and Actions*, ed. A. Bharati (The Hague: Mouton, 1976), pp. 165–73, and his "Tantric Medicine and Ritual Blessings," *Tibetan Journal* 1 (1976): 55–69.

40 Indeed, one of the most widely used Vajrayāna rites is that designed to protect the state. See my "Puns on the Humane King: Analogue and Application in an East Asian Apocryphon," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 109, no. 1 (January–March 1989): 17–24.

41 The sources for the *P'u-tu* are many, and I will list just a few here. The best description is still that in Juliet Bredon and Igor Mitrophanow, *The Moon Year: A Record of Chinese Customs and Festivals* (Shanghai: Kelly & Walsh, 1927), pp. 386–90. Also,

J. J. M. De Groot, *Les fêtes annuellement célébrées à Emoui* (Paris: Annales du Musée Guimet, 1886), 12:403–45; Marinus Wilhelm De Visser, *Ancient Buddhism in Japan*, 2 vols. (Leiden: Brill, 1935), 1:58–115; and Duane Pang, "The P'u-tu Ritual," in *Buddhist and Taoist Studies I*, ed. David W. Chappell and Michael Saso (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1977), pp. 95–122. For more, see Stephen Teiser, *The Ghost Festival in Medieval China* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1988), especially his excellent bibliography on the topic.

42 Teiser has limited investigations to the pre-Vajrayāna materials and to the mythology surrounding the figure of Mu-lien; see his "Postscript: The Ghost Festival after T'ang Times," p. 107.

43 I am not the first person to watch simultaneous Buddhist and Taoist performances of the *p'u-tu* and to remark on their similarity. Robert P. Weller in his *Unities and Diversities in Chinese Religion* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1987), pp. 117–24, has also noted it, as did Judith Boltz in her excellent study, "Opening the Gates of Purgatory: A Tenth Century Taoist Meditation Technique for the Salvation of Lost Souls," *Tantric and Taoist Studies*, Mélanges Chinois et Bouddhique 21 (1983), 2:487–511.

44 For the story of Mu-lien, see Arthur Waley, "Mu-lien Rescues His Mother," in *Ballads and Stories from Tun-Huang* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1960), pp. 216–35; Iwamoto Yutaka, *Mokuren Densetsu to Urabon* (Kyoto, 1968); and Kenneth Ch'en, *The Chinese Transformation of Buddhism* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1973), pp. 24–28; and now the standard reference, Teiser's *The Ghost Festival*, pp. 116–24.

45 Holmes Welch, *The Practice of Chinese Buddhism, 1900–1950* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1967), p. 207.

46 De Visser is one exception.

47 For instance, Welch, pp. 185, 197. This begs the question of ritual efficacy.

48 See Tadeusz Skorupski's translation and study of *The Sarvadurgatipariśodhana Tantra: Elimination of All Evil Destinies* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1983). The text not only deals with the various kinds of rites for propitiation, etc., but it specifically deals with aid to beings in the lower *gati*s, and it is related to the Yoga-tantra "class" of texts as are similar rites which I will detail below. Also relevant from a comparative and genetic point of view are the *Yi-dags kha-nas-me- 'bar-ba la skyabs-mdzad-pa'i gzuṅs* and the *Yi-dags-mo kha-'bar-ma dbugs-dbyuṅ-ba'i gtor-ma'i cho-ga*, Toh. 646, 1080 and 647, 1079, respectively; Yensho Kanakura, ed., *A Catalogue of the Tohoku University Collection of Tibetan Works on Buddhism* (Sendai: Tohoku University, 1953). These are translations of T. 1314 and T. 1313. There are popular parallels to the Chinese practice in the Tibetan *smyuṅ gnas*, an annual rite involving the lay community in the feeding of hungry ghosts.

49 Osabe treats these texts in his *Tōdai mikkyōshi zakkō*, pp. 204–52. The texts (T. 899, 905, 906) are connected with the "Three *siddhis*" movement and have little to do with the rites for the salvation of *preta*s that I am discussing. A quick reading of these texts indicates that they are heavily colored by Taoist ritual techniques. They would make a fascinating study on their own.

50 There is some disagreement over the attribution and dating of texts 1319 and 1320. More traditional scholars attribute both to Amoghavajra, while Osabe dates these texts, especially 1320, anywhere from late T'ang to Ming. See Osabe, *Tōdai mikkyōshi zakkō* (n. 2 above), pp. 154–55. Chou Shu-chia has recently noted that 1319 agrees with the Tibetan. Based on linguistic evidence Chou regards 1320 as a Yüan supplement which revives the original practice begun by Amoghavajra. See Chou Shu-chia, "Yen-k'ou," in *Chung-kuo fo-chiao* (Beijing, 1982), 2:397–99. There was a hungry ghost revival through the instigation of Chu-hung (1535–1615), who

revamped the rite by adding numerous chants and repetitions. He also wrote an influential commentary on the text. See Chun-fang Yü, *The Renewal of Buddhism in China: Chu-hung and the Late Ming Synthesis* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1981), pp. 184–85. For the relationship between the scriptural texts and the revamped ritual, see Chun-jo Liu with Ling-te Liao and Michael Welch, "The Serendipity Chants: A Descriptive Catalogue of the Recordings of the Buddhist Rite for the Dead, '*Yü-chia yen-k'ou shih-shih yao-chi*,'" *Chinoperl News* 3 (1973): esp. ix–xiv.

51 My summary is based on T. 1319:21.472b–473b26.

52 A brief overview of the rite is in T. 1319:21.473b27–c15.

53 Ritual details of the rite can be found in the *Taishō Zuzōshō* iconographic appendix to the Tripiṭaka (12 vols., hereafter *TZ*), vol. 3, *Besson zakki, chüan* 57; and vol. 7, *Byakuhōkusho, chüan* 62. The *Besson zakki* (twelfth century) contains much old material which likely dates from the T'ang. The *Byakuhōkusho* (fourteenth century) is of later date and highly colored by Shingon doctrinal controversies. For these works, see Raoul Birnbaum, *Studies on the Mysteries of Mañjuśrī* (n. 9 above), n. 56, pp. 109–11.

54 T. 1320:21.473c–476b. I am omitting line numbers in the following text references because of the half-size lines of auto-commentary on the visualizations and because each section is clearly demarcated and easy to find.

55 T. 1320:21.476b–c.

56 For Kṣitigarbha, see Marinus Wilhelm De Visser, *The Bodhisattva Ti-tsang (Jizo) in China and Japan* (Berlin: Oesterheld, 1914). Also *Sūtra of the Past Vows of Earth Store Bodhisattva*, Buddhist Text Translation Society (New York: Institute for Advanced Studies of World Religions, 1974). For Kṣitigarbha in the Taoist *p'u-tu*, see Pang (n. 41 above).

57 T. 1320:21.476c–477a; see 477a on the other *gatis*.

58 T. 1320:21.477b–c.

59 T. 1320:21.477c–478a. Like the notion of siddhi, "sweet dew" or *bodhicitta* is at once the "idea of enlightenment" (its usual English translation) and the tantric semen. Its abstract and concrete meanings are perhaps best encompassed by the translation "essence of enlightenment."

60 T. 1320:21.478b–479a. *Ju-i* here means the will to accomplish one's aims. It is often symbolized by a scepter or a gem.

61 T. 1320:21.479b–479c.

62 T. 1320:21.480a–c.

63 T. 1320:21.480c–482a.

64 T. 1320:21.482a–483b.

65 T. 1320:21.483b–484a constitutes an interesting text in itself, though it is beyond the limits of this discussion.

66 There is considerable disagreement as to the origins of the seventh *maṇḍala*. The *Vajradhātu Maṇḍala* is described by Tajima, *Les deux* (n. 2 above), pp. 162–97; by Toganoo Shōun, *Mandara no kenkyū* (Kyoto: Kōyasan University Press, 1936; reprinted in *Toganoo zenshū*, vol. 4 (Kyoto: Kōyasan University Press, 1958), pp. 204–62, and by Kiyota (n. 2 above), pp. 93–104. Note the contrasting arrangements of Tibetan *Vajradhātu Maṇḍalas* in David L. Snellgrove, *Buddhist Himalaya: Travels and Studies in Quest of the Origins and Nature of Tibetan Religion* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1957), pp. 227–42; and by Giuseppe Tucci in "Gyantse ed I suoi Monasteri, Part I: Descrizione Generale dei Tempi," in vol. 4 of his *Indo-Tibetica*, 4 vols. in 7 (Rome: Accademia d'Italia, 1941).

67 *TZ*, 2:2974–76; see Iyanaga, "Recits de la soumission" (n. 5 above), n. 143, pp. 706–7.

68 On *ko-i*, see Ch'en, *Buddhism in China* (n. 18 above), pp. 68–69; E. Zurcher, *The Buddhist Conquest of China: The Spread and Adaptation of Buddhism in Early Medieval China*, 2 vols., Sinica Leidensia 11 (Leiden: Brill, 1972), 1:184; T'ang Yung-t'ung, "On Ko-yi, the Earliest Method by Which Indian Buddhism and Chinese Thought Were Synthesized," in *Radhakrishnana: Comparative Studies in Philosophy*, ed. W. R. Inge et al. (London: Allen & Unwin, 1951), pp. 276–86; and Fung Yu-lan, *A History of Chinese Philosophy*, 2 vols., trans. Derk Bodde (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1953), 2:241–42.

69 The best recent work relating to the *T'ai-i* cult is Marc Kalinowski's "La transmission du dispositif des neuf palais sous les six-dynasties," *Tantric and Taoist Studies* 22 (1985): 773–811. Kalinowski criticizes the use of the terms *lo-shu* and *ho-t'u* as equivalents for a magic square of nine as a neo-Confucian anachronism. For more traditional views of this cosmology, see Fung Yu-lan, vol. 2, chap. 2, "Tung Chung-shu and the New Text School," and chap. 3, "Prognostication Texts, Apochrypha, and Numerology during the Han Dynasty." Also, Marcel Granet, *La pensée chinoise* (Paris: Editions Albin Michel, 1934; reprint, 1968), pp. 127–279. Briefer and more engaging are the articles by Schuyler Cammann, "The Magic Square of Three in Old Chinese Philosophy and Religion," *History of Religions* 1 (August 1961): 37–80, "Islamic and Indian Magic Squares, Parts 1, 2," *History of Religions* 8, nos. 3 & 4 (February and May 1969): 181–209, 271–99, and "Old Chinese Magic Squares," *Sinological* 7 (1962): 14–53. For the Ho-t'u, see Michael Saso, "What Is the Ho-T'u," *History of Religions* 17 (February–May 1978): 399–416. John B. Henderson treats the diagrams in his *The Development and Decline of Chinese Cosmology* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984), pp. 59–87.

70 There are several sources on the *Ming-t'ang*. The dated but classic volume is by W. E. Soothill, *The Hall of Light: A Study of Early Chinese Kingship*, ed. Lady Hosie and G. F. Hudson (London: Lutterworth, 1951). The best current source in English with a focus on the T'ang dynasty is Howard J. Wechsler, *Offerings of Jade and Silk: Ritual and Symbol in the Legitimation of the T'ang Dynasty* (New Haven, Conn., and London: Yale University Press, 1985), pp. 195–211. Comments on the *ming-t'ang* may also be found in Granet, pp. 90–99, 175–84, 210–29. Henri Maspero has a piece on the structure, "Le Ming-Tang et la crise religieuse chinoise avant les Han," *Mélanges Chinois et Bouddhiques* 9 (1951): 1–71. John S. Major includes the *ming-t'ang* in his "Five Phases, Magic Squares, and Schematic Cosmology," which appears in *Explorations in Early Chinese Cosmology*, ed. Henry Rosemont (Chico, Calif.: Scholars Press, 1984), pp. 133–66. Also see Paul Wheatley, *The Pivot of the Four Quarters: A Preliminary Enquiry into the Origins and Character of the Ancient Chinese City* (Chicago: Aldine, 1971), n. 129, pp. 470–71. A detailed account may also be found in the great Ch'ing Dynasty Encyclopedia, the *Ku-chin t'u-shu chi-ch'eng* (Taipei: Wen-hsing shu-tien, 1964) in the "Explanation of the T'ai-i Spirit," *ts'e* 490, pp. 16–20.

71 Kalinowski, p. 780, points out that this is the only documented pre-Sung dynasty confluence of the nonerian T'ai-i cult and imperial ritual. Also see Cammann, "The Magic Square of Three," pp. 37–38; the description in the "Explanation of the *T'ai-i* Spirit," *ts'e* 490, pp. 16–20; the account in the *Chiu t'ang shu* [The old T'ang history] (Peking: Chung-hua Shu-chü, 1975), pp. 922–39; and the "Altars of the Nine Courts," in the *T'ang hui-yao* [The essentials of the T'ang], comp. Wang P'u (929–82 A.D.) in one hundred *chüan* (Kiangsu shu-chü blockprint ed. of 1884), *chüan* 10b:17–23. The last is a full description.

72 Kalinowski discusses this in detail, and one cannot help but think that its sexual overtones were an added attraction to the Vajrayāna teachers.

73 Richard K. Payne, "Feeding the Gods: The Shingon Fire Ritual" (Ph.D. diss., Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, 1985).

74 John Lagerwey, *Taoist Ritual in Chinese Society and History* (New York: Macmillan, 1987), p. 172.

75 A comparison of the rites outlined above with those in Boltz (n. 43 above) and in Lagerwey clearly reveals a difference, especially in the internal "yogic" practice of the two systems; see Lagerwey, pp. 195–237. The text is in *Tao-tsang*, 217, *chüan* 60–62.

76 Jacques Gernet, *A History of Chinese Civilization* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), p. 281.

83

TRUE WORDS, SILENCE, AND THE ADAMANTINE DANCE

On Japanese Mikkyō and the formation of the Shingon discourse

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This paper deals with Japanese esoteric Buddhism (Mikkyō), in particular the Shingon tradition, as it relates to the emergence of new and peculiar epistemological concerns. Through a discussion of the kenmitsu *system outlined by Kuroda Toshio, the paper first situates Mikkyō within the religious and institutional framework of medieval Japan, underlining its liminal and heterological nature as both an institutionalized discourse and a reservoir of oppositional possibilities. The paper then analyzes the formation of Shingon orthodoxy as an attempt to systemalize the Tantric field in Japan through a re-organization of preexisting religious doctrines and practices. Special attention is given to the actual articulation of the* kenmitsu *episteme and its orders of significance. Finally, the paper outlines some fundamental epistemological tenets of Mikkyō discourse. Though it focuses on Shingon discourse and orthodoxy, this paper confronts basic epistemic assumptions and discursive practices common to the multifarious forms of esoteric Buddhism in Japan.*

The purpose of this paper is to describe the discourse of Japanese esoteric Buddhism (particularly the Shingon 真言 tradition) as it developed in conjunction with the emergence of a distinctive form of philosophical reflection on signs and the formation of a corpus of practices relating to the production of meaning.[1] My basic hypothesis is that esoteric Buddhism (Jpn. *mikkyō* 密教, secret teachings, hidden doctrines) can be understood as a discursive formation that presupposes a particular cosmology, attitude towards reality, and episteme ("the attitude that a socio-cultural community adopts in relation to its own signs"; Greimas and

COURTÉS 1979, p. 129). It can be seen, in other words, as an ensemble of knowledge and practices concerned with the interpretation of reality as well as the production, selection, conservation, and transmission of knowledge. These things, in turn, are implemented through interpretive strategies, repertoires of metaphors, and a general structuring of knowledge. Like every discourse, that of esoteric Buddhism determines (and is determined by) distinctive institutions, ideologies, rituals, and relations of power.[2]

The Mikkyō semiotic paradigm was extremely influential in Japan for centuries and still operates today on a certain cultural level (although in a marginalized and nonorganic fashion). An understanding of this paradigm is thus essential for the study not only of medieval Japanese religiosity and culture but also of the esoteric ceremonies, magic rituals, and traditional divination still performed in contemporary Japan.[3]

The reconstruction of medieval Mikkyō[4] discourse and its underlying episteme should, ideally, begin with a consideration of the Tantric-Daoist syncretism that occurred mainly, but not exclusively, within the Chinese Zhenyan 真言 lineage during the Tang and Song dynasties, and then trace its development and transformation in Japan. I confine myself, however, to the early and medieval Japanese Shingon tradition, not only to set reasonable boundaries to this study but also to answer in part the urgent need for a cultural history of the Shingon sect. The lack of such a history has been a major hindrance to the study of Japanese religiosity in its various manifestations and has left many questions unresolved, particularly those concerned with the ways in which Shingon knowledge and practices were codified, transmitted, and diffused, and with the modalities of interaction of the various esoteric lineages in Japan. Because of this the Shingon tradition in most major studies on premodern Japanese culture has been obliterated, or, at best, reduced to a mystified Kūkai 空海 (Kōbō Daishi 弘法大師; 774–835).[5]

I use the term "Shingon tradition" for want of a better translation of the term "Shingon-shū" 真言宗. In its medieval usage "Shingon-shū" indicated a loosely connected network of temples and lineages (*ryūha* 流派) that shared a myth of Kūkai as founder and a common set of initiatory knowledge and practices. This complex was defined in relation to other similar "sectarian" denominations, particularly those included in the Eight Schools system (*hasshū* 八宗) and its expanded versions.[6] In medieval Japan, the term *shū* 宗 referred essentially to a textual corpus associated with a transmission/foundation lineage in the Three Lands (India, China, Japan). Such corpora/lineages implied orthodoxy and legitimacy because they were officially recognized by the emperor and because they were traditionally associated with certain temples and sacred places (see GYŌNEN). Each *shū* was thus an influential cultural reality as part of the doctrinal, political, ideological, and geographical system of the Eight Schools, and at the same time an "abstract" ideological foundation legitimating the various locale-specific lineages.[7]

Though I will focus on the creation of Shingon discourse and orthodoxy,

I believe that the basic epistemic assumptions, discursive practices, and rhetorical strategies discussed here reflect traits common to all the multifarious forms assumed by esoteric Buddhism in Japan. By viewing Mikkyō as a discourse I will try to bring into relief an important, though often ignored, feature of Japanese medieval culture, and also counter the ideological mystifications of traditional sectarian scholarship with its stress on specific lineages and the figures (myths) of their founders. I hope thereby to avoid confining Mikkyō to the reassuring boundaries of our received knowledge.

Tantric Heterology and Its Japanese Avatar: The *Kenmitsu* System

Tantrism, from its very beginnings on the Indian subcontinent, has constituted a complex heterology, an often successful attempt to confer centrality to a heterogeneous ensemble of elements that were culturally marginal and were as such excluded from institutionalized discourses. This heterology in large part accounts for the difficulty of identifying a common substratum to Tantrism's multifarious historical and cultural manifestations.

Tantrism was in origin the heterology of what Michel de CERTEAU calls an "untiring murmur" at the background of Buddhist cultures, a "consumption" and displacement of "high" culture products and discourses by marginalized individuals and social groups (1990, p. 53). James BOON writes, " 'Tantrism' is a nineteenth-century European coinage based on an '*exotic*' term. The 'ism' part makes shifting fields of oppositions, differentiations, and plural relations sound substantive, doctrinaire, and uniform" (1990, p. 159). Tantrism can be characterized as a complex magico-ritual apparatus that systematically reverses the renouncement ideals proper to religious institutions, especially Buddhism (DUMONT 1979, pp. 342–43), although it does not necessarily conceive of itself as an opposition ideology. As will become clear later, this characteristic is shared, to some extent, by Japanese avatars of Tantrism. Ritual based on a principle of reversal seems, then, to be a fundamental trait of Tantrism. In fact, as BOON suggests, "Tantrism" is merely "a name for a polymorphous reservoir of ritual possibilities, continuously flirted with by orthodoxies yet also the basis of countering them"; it defines a field of possibilities against which "more orthodox positions and transformations become shaped and motivated" (1990, p. 165).[8]

Japanese Mikkyō provides an interesting case of "Tantric heterology." As Boon notes with respect to Tantrism in general, the very term "Mikkyō" presents Japanese esoteric Buddhism as an apparently uniform cultural entity. Actually, it covers three quite different aspects of Japanese Buddhism, among which it is important to distinguish.[9] The first aspect is the Tantric substratum as a "reservoir of ritual possibilities," a disseminated and nonsystematic cultural entity, a matrix of anti-institutional potentialities; this is an aspect often downplayed or ignored by traditional scholarship.[10] The second aspect is Tantrism as "flirted with by orthodoxies," that is, as a systematic and organized tradition

indissolubly related to non-Tantric forms of Buddhism (*kengyō* 顕教, exoteric teachings); this is the most common understanding of Mikkyō, since scholars usually stress the systematic aspects of Japanese Tantrism. Mikkyō in this second sense is organized into lineages and possesses textual corpora and ritual practices; it is a vast phenomenon encompassing various sectarian divisions. The third, and most limited, aspect is Mikkyō as the Shingon tradition, conceived of as the purest form of esoteric Buddhism.[11]

Tantric Buddhism in its second aspect interacted with other Japanese Buddhist movements, religious traditions, and philosophical systems to create a new organism, defined by KURODA Toshio (1975) as an "exoteric-esoteric system" (*kenmitsu taisei* 顕密体制) with its own ideology (*kenmitsushugi* 顕密主義, exo-esotericism). Kuroda's concepts—formulated to describe the complex Buddhist institutional system in medieval Japan—have opened the way to understanding Japanese Buddhism as a global cultural system possessing multiple interrelations with other religious and cultural systems. His concepts have undergone various adjustments, but on the whole they are useful tools for portraying what is an ideological, political, and economic organism.

Kuroda and such followers as Satō Hiroo, Sasaki Kaoru, and Taira Masayuki are concerned primarily with the social, institutional, and ideological aspects of the medieval *kenmitsu* system,[12] while I am concerned here more with its epistemic aspects. In particular, I see Mikkyō discourse as an important part of what I call the "*kenmitsu* episteme," by which I mean the basic epistemic features of Kuroda's "exoesoteric" system and ideology.

Kuroda distinguishes three phases in the formation of the *kenmitsu* system:

1. Mikkyō (in the first sense discussed above) unified all religious movements on an original "magic" background;
2. the Eight Schools established their own doctrines, esoteric practices, and *kenmitsu* theories[13] on this new esotericized basis;
3. the respective schools, thus organized, were recognized by secular society as legitimate Buddhism and formed a type of religious establishment with a strong social impact—a situation that occurred only in Japan.

KURODA stresses the fact that what underlies the entire *kenmitsu* system is not a particular sect, but Mikkyō in general as a common substratum of ideas and practices concerned with the ultimate meaning of reality and the supreme goals of Buddhist cultivation (1975, p. 537). The main characteristic of Japanese Mikkyō is its capacity to permeate and unify all religious traditions and to organize the magical beliefs of the people (pp. 432, 436). It differs from Indian Tantrism in the importance it assigns to rituals and prayers (*kitō* 祈祷) for worldly benefits and the protection of the state (p. 433), a difference based on deeper cultural motivations.[14] The *kenmitsu* system was not just a religious logic and ideology, but was so closely connected to Japanese political authority that it acquired the status of an official ideology and gradually esotericized the state

apparatuses (p. 434).[15] It constituted the hegemonic system of thought and practice in medieval Japan (pp. 445–46) and was the reigning orthodoxy and orthopraxy. Shinto was fitted into this framework as a local and concrete manifestation of Mikkyō (p. 537).

It should be noted that Kuroda sees the ensemble of Tendai concepts and practices known as *hongaku hōmon* 本覚法門 or *hongaku shisō* 本覚思想 as "the model of *kenmitsu* ideology" and the Tendai school as "the representative entity of the *kenmitsu* system" (1975, p. 445).[16] Although Kuroda mentions the central role of Kakuban's 覚鑁 Shingon thought in shaping the system (KURODA 1975, p. 475), he fails to analyze this role and thereby neglects the role of Shingon and other important esoteric lineages. Kuroda's treatment leaves it unclear whether he envisioned a single, Tendai-centered *kenmitsu* system shared by all other schools or whether he intended only to present another influential paradigm of a manifold reality.

I am inclined to believe the latter. I see the *kenmitsu* system, in the general terms it has been described above, not as the whole institutional and ideological apparatus of Japanese medieval Buddhism but as something akin to a "generative scheme" of multiple cultural interventions, an open framework that the various Buddhist schools and traditions could actualize on their own terms. In fact, all the Eight (or Ten) Schools offered the same range of "products" and "services": simple formulae for salvation and rebirth, easy practices, relations with local "Shinto" cults, esoteric doctrines and practices, political ideologies, services for the protection of the state and the ruling lineages (*chingo kokka* 鎮護国家), and so forth. These were then personalized through specific doctrines and practices. In this respect, the schools formed a sort of trust controlling the religious market, and Mikkyō was their common religious, epistemic, and ideological substratum.

There are other points in Kuroda's treatment of *kenmitsu* requiring further development. For instance, Kuroda does not mention the fact that the very notion of *kenmitsu* resulted from an act, both conceptual and practical, of articulation and restructuring that affected the entire Japanese religious and philosophical world. Nor does he deal in depth with the heterological nature of Tantrism or with the complex process of creating a Mikkyō discourse—a necessary requisite for establishing the *kenmitsu* system and its distinctive internal logic. Mikkyō's evolution is reduced to the thought of Kūkai and later Tendai developments, and the esotericization of other schools is presented as an inevitable outcome.

As we will see in more detail later, "Kengyō" was constructed simultaneously with "Mikkyō" as the Shingon exegetes dissimulated, rearticulated, displaced, and rewrote preexisting doctrines and practices. No place was recognized in this process for the ritual rivals of Kūkai's Mikkyō: Onmyōdō 陰陽道 and the preceding or competing forms of esoteric Buddhism (*zōmitsu* 雑密, *taimitsu* 台密).[17] The ideology of *kenmitsu* was introduced by Kūkai in his *Ben kenmitsu nikyō ron* as a means of defining the polar relation between the

Shingon esoteric system and preexisting teachings, which he considered superficial and provisional. In this respect Kūkai reversed traditional hermeneutical criteria,[18] turning what was "evident" (*ken* 顕, teachings that are clear and self-evident without problems of interpretation) into something "superficial," and what was "hidden" or "not immediately evident" (*mitsu* 密, teachings related to a certain intention of the Buddha and therefore apparently unclear and requiring interpretation) into something "profound and true."

Kūkai's understanding of the term *kenmitsu* came to be widely accepted, and after the late Heian period was commonly used to designate the whole Buddhist system (although Kūkai's redistribution of doctrines and practices was rooted in the old idea of the existence of a secret transmission of the true teachings and rituals of the Buddha—an East Asian counterpart of the European hermetic mysteries). In this manner, Kūkai opened the way for a definition of the Mikkyō discursive field as comprising that which the other doctrines do not teach, that which the other schools ignore and leave unsaid. The silence of the Buddha marked the boundaries of Shingon intervention.

Mikkyō played another important role, functioning as a relay in the circuit between center and margin. This made the *kenmitsu* system an important instrument of power. By controlling and integrating negative forces that threatened the cultural center from "outside" (KOMATSU and NAITŌ 1985) and by providing central institutions with an efficacious cosmology and a distinctive epistemic field, Mikkyō paradoxically became the dominant paradigm of Japanese medieval culture.[19] Systematic Mikkyō, itself a product of a semantic reversal, succeeded in reformulating on its own terms and from its own perspective—that of systematic reversal—the main concepts and practices of Japanese culture.[20] Moreover, monks belonging to esoteric lineages were closely related to the imperial court and the ruling lineages, so that the Tendai and Shingon schools exerted a true hegemony (a hegemony that was economic as well).[21]

It is, I believe, safe to assume that the real *kenmitsu* matrix of the Shingon school emerged during the late Heian period with the appearance of a new literary genre: the treatises on the distinction between *ken* and *mitsu* by such great scholars and religious figures as Saisen 最暹 (1025–1115), Jitsuhan 実範 (?–1144), and Kakuban 覚鑁 (1095–1143). Generally ignored by scholars today, these men were directly responsible for the creation of medieval Mikkyō. Contemporary events—such as the creation of the cult of Kōbō Daishi or the emergence of Kōyasan as an object of popular faith connected with the quest for immortality and rebirth in paradise—were closely related, on the one hand, to the cultural mood of the time (the idea of *mappō* 末法 and the search for methods to counter it), and, on the other, to the need of religious institutions to gain new sources of income and wider social support. In this respect, it is interesting that the collection and study of Kūkai's works, as well as the attempt to adapt Mikkyō to new religious needs and trends, began after the creation of new forms of cult and religious "consumption."

Still, Mikkyō heterology never lost its formidable function of opposition,

precisely because of its special contact with the "outside" and with "otherness," and because of its direct links with marginal, heterodoxical, and ambiguous cultural products (sacred mountain cults, popular religious practices, and social organizations of marginality).[22] Among the expressions of Mikkyō were the *hijiri* 聖, marginal religious figures that gravitated around central political and religious institutions and possessed the power to subvert them.[23] The number of *hijiri* and monks of low status using their esoteric training to get close to political power was large, and included such figures as Gyōki 行基 (668–749), Genbō 玄昉 (8th c.), and Dōkyō 荀鏡 (d. 770) in the Nara period, Kūkai and Kakuban in the Heian period, and Monkan 文観 (1278–1357) and many of the monks around Emperor Godaigo in the Nanbokuchō era. A later example was Tenkai 天海 (1536–1643), the architect of the political and religious cosmology of the Tokugawa government. An example of a "Tantric" attempt to organize social marginality was the Shingon Ritsu tradition of Eison 叡尊 (1201–1290) and Ninshō 忍性 (1217–1303) (Ōishi 1987).

Mikkyō never became a unified opposition force, but was a reservoir of nonorganized and asystematic oppositional possibilities. Its history is a series of attempts to keep an almost impossible balance between center and periphery, between institutionalized discourses and practices and their heterological counterparts. A conflictual relation between center and margin existed throughout the whole of premodern Japanese history, contributing to the flourishing of the esoteric tradition. Nevertheless, people apparently did not realize the questionable compromises such a stance entailed, with perhaps the only significant exception being the Hossō monk Tokuitsu 徳一 at the beginning of the Heian period.

Tokuitsu's criticism of Mikkyō

That Tokuitsu (fl. ca. 820) was aware of the heterological nature of Kūkai's new Mikkyō is evident from his *Shingonshū miketsu-mon*, a short treatise in which he listed his doubts and criticisms concerning Shingon doctrines and practices (T #2458, 77.862–865). A seemingly harmless work, it in fact reveals the total incompatibility of Mikkyō with the doctrines of the Six Nara Schools (Tsuda 1985). As noted by Takahashi Tomio, Tokuitsu's criticism was directed less at the Shingon school than at Mikkyō as a distinct new tradition (1990, 181–82). His criticism encompassed Tendai forms of Mikkyō as well, so that Tendai monks were among those who responded to him.

The tenor of the debate was unusual. While disputes among schools in East Asia were usually over the provisional or ultimate nature of teachings or lineages, Tokuitsu argued from a Mahāyāna perspective that Mikkyō, as explained by Kūkai, was utterly untenable. His criticism was directed particularly against the features of Kūkai's thought connected with the formation of an orthodox esoteric discourse separate from the Nara Buddhist establishment, features such as the authenticity of the esoteric lineage, the salvific value of its practices, the idea of *sokushin jōbutsu* 即身成仏 (becoming Buddha in this very body), and the

unconditioned nature of the Sanskrit language. Since Kūkai saw the salvific power of his teachings as lying in the absolute nature of esoteric words,[24] Tokuitsu's observations threatened his Shingon system at its very basis: if mantras are not expressions of an unconditioned language, then the truth they convey is conditioned and the rapid attainment of *siddhi* (supernatural powers) is consequently impossible. This would amount to the dissolution of Mikkyō. Tokuitsu's doubts are thus clues to the fundamental alterity of the esoteric system, and to the impossibility of understanding it on the basis of Mahāyāna principles.[25]

Because of Tokuitsu's perhaps unexpected attack, Kūkai realized that influential figures in Nara Buddhism saw the teachings of his new school as flawed, yet nevertheless as potentially threatening. In order to confer preeminence upon the Shingon doctrines, therefore, Kūkai had to find new hermeneutical criteria. He also was at least partly aware of the fundamental heterogeneity of Mikkyō, and accordingly stressed its systematic coherence with Mahāyāna texts. Although Kūkai never explicitly answered Tokuitsu's criticisms,[26] all of his work can be understood as an indirect reply (for a different interpretation, see TSUDA 1985).

Only by raising Shingon Mikkyō above its marginal and asystematic background could Kūkai and his successors confer on the Shingon school a dominant role within the Japanese religious establishment. In order to bring this about it was necessary, first, to create a new discourse and orthodoxy that partially concealed Tantrism's heterogeneity and underlined its continuity with the dominant forms of state Buddhism; and, second, to devalue most preceding Tantric forms and write a new classification of Japanese Buddhist schools. A very difficult agenda, undoubtedly. But Kūkai's efforts, especially in consolidating the *kenmitsu* categorization, constituted an impressive attempt to create a new tradition. The endeavor required time to bear fruit, and several centuries passed before convincing replies to Tokuitsu's objections were formulated: first it was necessary to build up a solid alternative point of view grounded in a systematic discourse. Of course, the debate did not concern only theoretical matters and doctrinal prestige; what was really at stake was ideological supremacy and power.

Tokuitsu's criticisms were not pursued by other members of the contemporary Buddhist establishment, and Tokuitsu was silenced even by his own Hossō colleagues and successors. The Nara establishment soon realized the ideological and ritual importance of the new Mikkyō as an instrument of political and economic control, and adopted it in a sort of surreptitious paradigm shift. Esoteric Buddhism became in this way an essential feature of premodern Japanese culture. It is not by accident, therefore, that Tokuitsu has been canceled from the official history of Japanese Buddhism, and that most of his works are no longer extant. Forced to play the role of the loser in the debates on the *kenmitsu* matrix, he became a kind of scapegoat of the *kenmitsu* system.

Purity and heterogeneity: the formation of Mikkyō discourse

In his criticism of Mikkyō, Tokuitsu ignored the important fact that Nara and early Heian Buddhism already contained numerous esoteric (Tantric) elements, mainly relating to the ritual and meditative apparatus. Among these elements were those directed toward the political center (e.g., rites for the protection of the state) and those expressive of cultural and political marginality (e.g., individual practices to gain various *siddhi*) (see KUSHIDA 1964, 1–54; HAYAMI 1975; MURAYAMA 1987, 1990). We see here a different configuration of the traits that characterize Indian Tantrism (DUMONT 1979). The ritual apparatus of Nara Buddhism, with regard to both central state rites and marginal individual practices, was Tantric in that it reversed Buddhist ideals of renunciation by stressing material benefits and protection of the state (symbolized by the imperial lineage).[27]

Later Shingon scholars stress the "miscellaneous," "unsystematic," and "fragmentary" nature of Nara Mikkyō, which they label *zōmitsu* 雑密, in contrast to the pure, systematic, and mature esoteric teachings—*junmitsu* 純密 —that were supposedly introduced to Japan by Kūkai. Although the distinction between *zōmitsu* and *junmitsu* is often taken for granted, its basic criteria are neither clear nor objective, and it is thus quite problematic as a description of actual doctrinal and ritual differences.[28] MISAKI (1988) has demonstrated the existence of multiple esoteric trends in Tang China, and of numerous attempts to construct orthodoxies. These efforts were continued in Japan by Shingon and Tendai monks. The *junmitsu*/*zōmitsu* distinction was the product of just such an effort, one that rewrote Mikkyō's history to magnify Kūkai's lineage, downplay Tantric practices and rites prior to Amoghavajra,[29] and belittle subsequent developments in rival lineages. These efforts, animated by a certain "volonté d'orthodoxie" (a term used by Bernard Faure), were in large part successful, though the translation and production of so-called *zōmitsu* texts did not cease (MISAKI 1988, pp. 146–47). Tantric multiplicity also continued to flourish in marginal cults like Tachikawa-ryū 立川流, local traditions like Shugendō 修験衜, and even "orthodox" Mikkyō as institutionalized lineages proliferated and sometimes integrated heterodoxical practices.

The *Mikkyō daijiten* defines *junmitsu* as a synonym for *ryōbu* 両部 *mikkyō*, a form of Mikkyō that combines the doctrines and practices of the Womb (*taizō* 胎藏) system and the Diamond or Vajra (*kongō* 金剛) system. *Junmitsu* is believed to be the direct expression of the enlightenment of Dainichi Nyorai 大日如来 (Mahāvairocana), the personification of the Dharmakāya (MD, p. 1108). *Zōmitsu* is synonymous with *zōbu* 雑部 *mikkyō*, that is, everything in Mikkyō that cannot be reduced to *junmitsu*. It comprises conditioned doctrines and rituals propounded by Dainichi Nyorai's three communicational and transformational bodies (the *tajuyūshin* 他受用身, *hengeshin* 変化身, and *tōrushin* 等流身), and as such is explicitly inferior to *ryōbu*. This is a major difference

with respect to Tendai Mikkyō (*taimitsu* 台密), according to which the *zōbu* is the very space where the nondualism of the Womb and the Diamond systems is realized.

The term *zōbu* was first used by Kūkai in the *Shingonshū shogaku kyōritsuron mokuroku*, his catalogue of esoteric texts (also known as the *Sangakuroku*) compiled in 823. This work, perhaps the first systematic attempt to classify Mikkyō texts (MISAKI 1988, p. 150), utilizes the three traditional categories of sūtras (*daikyō* 大経), precepts (*ritsu* 律), and treatises (*ron* 論). The Shingon sūtras are then classified as Diamond-lineage, Womb-lineage, or miscellaneous (*zōbu*). Problems with criteria and modalities appeared even in this early classification,[30] however, and later attempts were not much more successful.[31] The criteria tended to be arbitrary and overly influenced by the desire to support the claims to orthodoxy of the compiler's own lineage. It is not surprising then that the *ryōbu/zōbu* distinction is related within Shingon to the more general *kenmitsu* articulation.

It is nevertheless possible to trace a distinction between Nara Mikkyō and later Mikkyō. In the latter one finds an attempt to develop a systematic discourse, different from and sometimes antithetical to "normal" Buddhist discourse. Although very few differences can be detected between *junmitsu* and *zōmitsu* with regard to cosmology and soteriology, Heian Mikkyō presents a more systematic aspect, and devotes a large amount of attention to semiotic and discursive problems (usually connected, again, with its need to establish its own orthodoxy). It may be that such a discursive self-awareness was also present in late Nara Mikkyō, an interesting point requiring further research. But, though of interest for the history of Japanese culture and the establishment of the esoteric orthodoxy, this possibility does not affect the characteristics of the full-fledged Mikkyō discourse.

Esoteric elements in pre-Heian Japan were assembled into a literary and ritual genre, a loose corpus called the *darani-zō* 陀羅尼蔵, one of the five sections of the Buddhist Canon in the *prajñā-pāramitā* tradition (*Dasheng liqu liuboluomituo jing*, T. 8.868b; see also Kūkai's treatment of the subject in the *Ben-kenmitsu nikyō-ron*). The esoteric formulae, variously called *darani, ju* 呪, and *mitsugo* 密語, are discussed in many Mahāyāna texts (UJIKE 1984; MISAKI 1988, pp. 18–25). The wide diversity of approaches and interpretations shows that dharanic expressions made up a heterogeneous field not organically integrated within Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna traditions.

According to UJIKE Kakushō (1984), who describes in detail the development of dharanic thought in China and Japan, spells designed to facilitate the understanding and usage of Mahāyāna doctrines developed into instruments of power, and later became a kind of microcosm that offered the chance to "become a Buddha in this very body" (*sokushin jōbutsu* 即身成仏). UJIKE points out that, after the age of the great Tang *ācāryas*, increasing attention to linguistic problems together with a new vision of salvation caused the transformation of the *darani-zō* into the Shingon vehicle (1984; see also RAMBELLI 1992, pp. 189–93).

And just as mysticism separated from theology in Europe in a process studied by CERTEAU (1982), so the dharanic ideas and practices of the *darani-zō* detached themselves from the Mahāyāna corpus to form an independent discourse. This movement "is related to a sharper consciousness of a specific and original language. The word that referred to an *experience* developed to designate a *language*" (Michel de Certeau, quoted in the introduction to the Italian translation of CERTEAU 1982 [Bologna: Il Mulino, 1987]).

Tantrism was also concerned with the operations performed on the terms it invested with meaning. It thus possessed pragmatic and metalinguistic significance: it specified both how to use and how to interpret its expressions. It specified, in other words, how to *practice* language. These linguistic and semiotic practices, when they became complex and explicit enough, established a field of their own: *junmitsu* Mikkyō. Mikkyō proposed a unitary and organic vision of esoteric linguistic phenomena, thus performing a restructuring of Buddhist discursivity. Denomination marked the will to unify all the operations until then dispersed, to organize, select, and regulate them. A new discipline was born from this attempt to systematize discursive practices (see also CERTEAU 1982).

In this process, undoubtedly connected to more general cultural factors, *junmitsu* emerged as (Shingon) Mikkyō orthodoxy; thus "pure" Mikkyō was the result of a mystified idea—an ideology—of orthodoxy, purity, and uncontamination. The very concept of a Shingon "school," with its overtones of unity and group identity, conceals the manifold moves made over the centuries to exploit new and different possibilities of representation. Bernard FAURE has deconstructed traditional views of lineage and orthodoxy through a critique of their arborescent model: "Orthodoxy takes its shape not from its kernel—a lineage—but from its margins, the other trends against which it reacts by rejecting or encompassing them" (1987, p. 54). Shingon Mikkyō, too, developed in rhizome-like fashion as the result of "an amnesia, an active forgetting of origins" (1991, p. 14), and of complex interactions with so-called *zōmitsu* and *taimitsu* intervention.

This being the case, what is the role of the founder, Kūkai, in this rhizomatic process? As FAURE explains, "Individuals . . . are not the source of tradition, but rather its products, its nodal points, its textual paradigms or points of reemergence" (1987, p. 54). Contrary to traditional myths, Kūkai is to be considered the emergence of peculiar discursive strategies in relation to already extant ideologies, discourses, and literary genres. His achievement can be seen to lie in his successful attempt to bring esoteric trends into the proximity of the political, institutional, and cultural center through his construction of a new Mikkyō orthodoxy.

A "space of interplay": the Kenmitsu matrix and its surrounding silence

Let us now turn to the processes whereby orthodox Mikkyō discourse was generated. As CERTEAU points out, "The right to exercise language *otherwise* is

objectified in a set of circumscriptions and procedures" (1986, p. 83). First, "a spatializing operation which results in the determination or displacement of the boundaries delimiting cultural fields" (pp. 67–68) is necessary. Next, "the spatial divisions which underlie and organize a culture" will be reworked (p. 68).

As explained above, the first step in the formation of Mikkyō discourse ("determination or displacement of the boundaries delimiting cultural fields") involved the problematic and artificial articulation of the Tantric field into *junmitsu* and *zōmitsu* through the constitution of a new orthodoxy grounded in the myth of a direct transmission of an original ostension.[32] Sources report that Dōji 道慈 (?–744), the Nara monk credited with introducing the *Kokūzō gumonji-hō* 虚空蔵求聞持法 to Japan, studied in the Tang capital Changan under the *ācārya* Śubhakarasiṃha (Shanwuwei 善無畏 637–735). In order to counter this and assert his own claim to orthodoxy, Kūkai had to invent a new, more powerful, and more appealing lineage, the one that connected him to Amoghavajra. Thus much of the Shingon textual production is pervaded by an insistence on the contrast between the old teachings (miscellaneous and impure and therefore ineffective), and Kūkai's new teachings (systematic and pure and therefore extremely effective). This is not a mere rhetorical topos, but part of the ideological operation that helped establish Shingon sectarian orthodoxy by declassing earlier tendencies as *zōmitsu* and silencing rival lineages like *taimitsu*.

Although officially relegated to the periphery of the Shingon system, *zōmitsu* and, to a certain extent, *taimitsu* were de facto retained as an essential part of Shingon Mikkyō. The general *ken-mitsu* distinction operated as a "generative scheme," according to which the fundamental oppositions common to the whole Mahāyāna tradition could be displaced, relocated, and reinterpreted. Relevant questions included the "sudden/gradual" soteriological polarity, the Twofold Truth paradigm, the conditioned/unconditioned nature of the Buddha's preaching, and the semantic levels of language (*jisō* 字相 / *jigi*). 字義

Michel de Certeau's second phase, the more general cultural reorganization, corresponds to the Tantric restructuring of the whole religious situation in Japan, an operation—perhaps already completed in Tang China—that culminated in Kūkai's articulation of the ten levels of the *kenmitsu* system in the *Himitsu mandara jūjūshinron*.[33] Kūkai "reversed" the classifications of the Three Teachings (*sangō* 三教) and traditional Chinese Buddhist *panjiao* 判教 hermeneutics, which ignored esoteric teachings, by placing his new "orthodox" Mikkyō at the top—and, at the same time, in the background—of the whole system, thus strategically situating formerly marginal practices at the center of the Buddhist establishment.[34] Although engaged in articulating their own system, Shingon commentators stressed the continuity of their own teachings with those that preceded them: important authors like Kūkai, Kakuban, and Raiyu 頼瑜 (1226–1304) untiringly repeated that the difference between Mikkyō and Kengyō lies not in their ultimate truth, which is identical, but rather in their approach to it, which is utterly different.

Basically, Kūkai's doctrinal and ritual system contained few innovative

elements. The Chinese Tiantai 天台 and Huayan 華厳 schools already recognized the possibility of becoming a Buddha in the present life, and Tantric elements already existed in most schools. It is possible to argue that Kūkai's success was the result of his ability to provide the emperor and the imperial system with a new ideology and a new imagery, rooted in a grandiose cosmology and explicitated in powerful rituals (such Tantric imperial imagery and ritual were very fashionable at that time in the sinicized world). The truly new characteristic of *junmitsu*—the one that firmly grounded it—was its conviction that it was the only true discourse by virtue of its esoteric ordering of things.

As CERTEAU has explained, the process of articulating and establishing a new discourse requires a "space of interplay,"

> one that establishes the text's difference, makes possible its operations and gives it "credibility" in the eyes of its readers, by distinguishing it both from the conditions within which it arose (the context) and from its object (the content).
>
> (1986, p. 68)

Such a "space of interplay," a kind of meta-discursive level, is to be found in the *kenmitsu* generative scheme, where, as explained above, Buddhism was rearticulated in order to establish the place of Mikkyō in the religious discourse. Shingon orthodoxy (*junmitsu*) lived between two vast silences, between two kinds of unsaid: it emerged from an "ideological silence" where its *zōmitsu* origins were actively forgotten and its Tantric rivals silenced, and it set its discursive space on a background of "epistemological silence," in the sublime realm that the other traditions considered beyond the reach of language and thought. Mikkyō deals with what the other doctrines do not teach, with what the other schools cannot fathom and are silent about: the realm of the supreme enlightenment of the Buddha.[35] Thus silence is an important element in the construction of the discourse of True Words. *Mitsu* represents a further reversal of perspective: it deals not with the itinerary of sentient beings toward Buddhahood, but with discourse from the absolute point of view of the unconditioned Dharmakāya.

Kenmitsu doctrine

Let us now look at the basic doctrinal framework of the *kenmitsu* matrix, based on a small corpus of representative texts on the subject.[36] I hope that this short and synchronic account of the core of Mikkyō teachings will provide a useful starting point for further inquiry, despite its neglect of subtle doctrinal distinctions, sectarian controversies, and important historical developments.

As explained above, Mikkyō divides the teachings of the Tathāgata into two general kinds: superficial and secret. Superficial teachings are the provisional doctrines taught by Śākyamuni, or, more generally, by the lower, conditioned

manifestations of the Buddha: the Nirmāṇakāya and Saṃbhogakāya. The meaning of these teachings is clear and easy to comprehend. Secret teachings are "the most profound doctrines beyond the faculties of sentient beings, dealing with the ultimate secrets of all Buddhas' enlightenment" (RAIHŌ, 734c–35a). As an unconditioned discourse spoken by the Dharmakāya to itself for the pure pleasure of the Dharma,[37] these teachings are permanent and immutable and transcend the doctrine of the Decline of the Law (*mappō* 末法).[38] They are composed of "real words" (*shinjitsugo* 真実語) free from all communicational, pragmatic, and contextual constraints.[39] In this way, esoteric teachings elude the logic of *upāya* and are not restrained by their listeners' expectations and limitations, a major shortcoming of Mahāyāna from the Mikkyō point of view.[40]

Ken and *mitsu* show also different attitudes towards principle (*ri* 理) and phenomena (*ji* 事).[41] This is particularly important for the present discussion, because these two ontological categories possess a deep semiotic relevance. According to the Mahāyāna, *ri* can be seen as the ideal *type* of a sign, while *ji* defines its *tokens*, actual and manifold occurrences. *Ken* distinguishes between *ri* and *ji*, thereby establishing two levels: Dharma-essence (*hosshō* 法性) versus its multifarious dharmic aspects. *Ken* thus fails to attain true nondual knowledge. Mikkyō, in contrast, states that both *ri* and *ji* are absolute and unconditioned: every single dharma, with all its particularities, is marked by the "aspect of true reality." According to the esoteric tradition, the Dharmakāya's modalities of existence (*shiju hosshin* 四種法身), its activities (*sanmitsu* 三密), and its wisdom (*gochi* 五智) are not different from the elements of ordinary human cognition (sense organs, objects, mind apparatus). As a consequence, the esoteric absolute principle (*ri*), or *tathatā*, is in a nondual relation to phenomena (*ji*), being articulated in substance (*taidai* 体大), signs (*sōdai* 相大), and dynamic manifestations (*yūdai* 用大). It does not transcend human intellective faculties, and the world of enlightenment—the ultimate result of religious practice (*kabun* 果分—can be described and explained in the absolute language of the Dharmakāya.[42]

Individual phenomena do not differ from the supreme principle; an individual entity is no longer a mere token (*ji*) of a type (*ri*), but is itself an absolute, a microcosm. There is ultimately no distinction between the mind of each ascetic, the global mind of sentient beings, and the Buddha. Salvation is thus close and easy to attain: the person who performs Mikkyō rituals after proper initiation is able to accomplish the sublime practice of *sanmitsu* in his or her "body generated by father and mother and become Buddha instantaneously." Although maṇḍalas and dhāraṇīs are not suited to those of low abilities, their powers and virtues are unfathomable, and even the most superficial practice produces benefits and blessings. The esoteric cosmos is an immense salvific machine, in which everything is absolute.

As Tokuitsu realized, at least in part, Mikkyō's differences with the rest of Buddhism relate to the nature, structure, and power of signs. While the Mahāyāna schools describe the Dharmakāya—the absolute, the kernel of Buddhist ontology and soteriology—as devoid of signs and forms, Mikkyō describes it as the totality of all possible signs. The Dharmakāya is thus able to "speak"

and explain to all beings its own enlightenment—an absolute language exists that is able to convey in some way the ultimate reality (RAMBELLI 1994). The essential identity of sentient beings (*shujō* 衆生) and Buddhas is the ground for symbolic practices that lead to the reproduction within the practitioner of the characteristics and particularities of the absolute.

Semiosophia, semiognosis, semiopietas: Mikkyō orders of significance

It is now necessary to outline the internal structure of the *kenmitsu* episteme. An account of the actual articulation of the *kenmitsu* epistemic field should take into account the following considerations:

1 the diachronic transformation of Buddhist semiotics;
2 the complex epistemic relations within Buddhism as both a "high" culture and a "popular" phenomenon;[43]
3 the presence of other influential models of semiotics and semiosis (Confucian, Daoist, and later, "Western") that coexisted and interacted in various ways with and within the *kenmitsu* epistemic field.

On a superficial level, the most evident feature of Mikkyō texts (both Shingon and Tendai) is their phonetic and graphic exoticism, in which the foreign is considered closer to the Origin. This is reflected in the large number of Sanskrit terms and in the wide usage of *siddhaṃ* (Jpn. *shittan*悉曇) characters. It could be said that the core of Mikkyō texts is formed by *shingon/shittan*, and that everything else exists only to create a context so that they might be correctly practiced.[44] This reflects an idea of language and signs typical of Tantrism. As we have seen, ancient *zōmitsu* texts were a heterogeneous part of the Mahāyāna paradigm: their language was an *upāya* to convey meaning or induce certain actions. In the Mahāyāna philosophy of language, linguistic expression has value only insofar as it is able to convey its contents, to which it has an arbitrary connection. As Etienne LAMOTTE puts it, "The letter indicates the spirit just as a fingertip indicates an object, but since the spirit [that is, the meaning] is alien to syllables . . . the letter is unable to express it in full" (1988, p. 15). With the formation of a Tantric discourse in East Asia, basic linguistic conceptions changed. Language was transformed from an *upāya* into an absolute and unconditioned entity, something that could not be translated without losing its essential character. Kūkai believed that the Indian phonemes and script were endowed with a unique nature. He wrote:

> Mantras, however, are mysterious, and each word is profound in meaning. When they are transliterated into Chinese, the original meanings are modified and the long and short vowels confused.
>
> (KŪKAI, *Shōrai mokuroku*, translated in HAKEDA 1972, p. 144)

Correct interpretation and use depend upon correct transmission. Kūkai mentions that Amoghavajra, aware of the limits of translation, initiated his disciples using Indian words only (KŪKAI, *Bonji shittan jimo narabini shakugi*, T 84.361). He thereby lent epistemic relevance to the esoteric concept of an unaltered transmission based upon an original ostension (a necessary part of founding an orthodoxy).

Mikkyō semiotics is what governs the expression of that which transcends ordinary language (cf., RAMBELLI 1992). It is possible to recognize within Mikkyō three different modes of semiotic knowledge and interpretive practice of reality: semiosophia, semiognosis, and semiopietas.[45]

Semiosophia refers to exoteric forms of the knowledge of signs (*sō* 相), according to which language and signs are considered to be arbitrary and illusory, but nevertheless usable as *upāya* to indicate the truth. I use this term instead of *semiotics* in order to distinguish it from both semiotics as common sense and semiotics as metalanguage.[46] Various *ken* types of semiotics can be classed as semiosophia, including Kusha, Hossō, Sanron, Tendai, and Kegon. Although there seem to be basically three epistemological models (Abhidharma, Mādhyamika, and Yogācāra), each school developed its own concept of the sign in relation to its view of ultimate reality and its hermeneutical strategies. In the *kenmitsu* paradigm, *mitsu* semiotics presupposes *ken* semiotics;[47] semiosophia thus constitutes the superficial level (*senryakushaku* 浅略釈) on which the esoteric interpretive structure (*jinpishaku* 深秘釈) is built.

Semiognosis denotes esoteric semiotic doctrines and practices as

> something akin to a type of soteriological knowledge (i.e., leading to salvation) that is gained through specific practices of a predominantly ritual and/or mystical character ... [B]oth [semio]sophia and [semio]gnosis are connected with systems of symbolic representation, but their epistemological frameworks and intentionality differ.
>
> (GRAPARD forthcoming; the original uses *geosophia* and *geognosis* instead of *semiosophia* and *semiognosis*)

Semiognosis refers to specific knowledge and practices that are "claimed to have been extracted from [signs themselves], to correspond in mysterious ways to sacred scriptures and to divine rule, and to lead either to mystical achievement or to religious salvation" (GRAPARD forthcoming). The initiatory knowledge concerning structure, function, and power of the esoteric symbols (especially mantric expressions) is considered the kernel of enlightenment and the key to "becoming Buddha in this very body."[48]

In consequence, one of the fundamental activities of the Mikkyō exegete is "remotivating" language and signs, that is, overcoming the arbitrariness of language and signs by finding a special "natural" relation between expression, meaning, and referential object. Remotivation is accomplished by reorganizing each expression's semantic structure and thereby making the expression

"identical" to its meaning. In this process an esoteric symbol becomes a kind of replica of its object, and the practice in which it occurs is deemed identical to its goal. Mikkyō salvific practices consist mainly in visualization and manipulation of mantric expressions (*shingon-darani*) and other complex symbols of various kinds, whose very structure, organized on three deeper levels (*jinpi* 深秘, *hichū no jinpi* 秘中之深秘, *hihichū no jinpi* 秘々中之深秘), appears to the initiated person as the inscription of the path both to salvation and to the attainment of *siddhi*.[49]

Related to semiognosis is *honji suijaku* 本地垂迹, an expression of the realm of meaning of Shinto and Buddhism that is itself a result and a displacement of the *kenmitsu* epistemic field. The combinatory logic and practices (*shūgō* 習合) of *honji suijaku* concern the relationships between the Shinto and Buddhist deities, myths, and doctrines that lie at the basis of Japanese medieval religiosity and ideology, and obey rules grounded on "associative linguistic phenomena such as metaphor, paronomasia, and anagogy" (GRAPARD 1988, p. 264; see also 1987, 1992). In other words, operations on the substance (both graphic and phonetic) of language and meaning governed the esoteric interpretation of reality.[50] According to Grapard, such combinatory practices brought about a reduction from plurality to singularity (1987), but I think that they also exposed the plural nature of supposedly singular entities.[51] This kind of esoteric operation on signs is remarkably evident in a corpus of medieval texts known as *engimono* 縁起物, which deal with the history of sites of cult.

The esoteric episteme, in its more conscious and systematic manifestations, was basically a "high" culture phenomenon. Nevertheless, it is important to trace the dissemination of esoteric doctrines and practices among the general populace, and to analyze their transformations and the counter-practices they produced. This dissemination was extremely important for the establishment, which saw the "esotericization" of the lives, activities, and environment of the ordinary people as a powerful device for controlling them. In general, "popular" texts dealing with Buddhism (performances, sermons, *kana* literature, and narratives) were not directly concerned with esoteric doctrine—one must recall that, because of Mikkyō's belief that it expressed the absolute point of view of the perfectly enlightened Buddha, it was not easy for Mikkyō to translate its doctrines into everyday language and practice. However, the discourse to which such popular texts belong, and therefore their semiotic presuppositions, discursive strategies, and rhetorical devices, are definitely esoteric.[52] In the *engimono* genre, Mikkyō succeeded in transposing its absolute logic of the unconditioned (*jinen hōni* 自然法爾) into a narrative of karmic events that occurred at specific historical moments in specific places (see KURODA 1989). These widely circulated materials were the major vehicle for the "popularization" of the esoteric conceptions and the power relations that they implied.

The diffuse beliefs and practices of the uninitiated concerning such sacred esoteric objects as images, texts, amulets, and talismans constitute *semiopietas*, "a primarily religious mood of relation to sacred [signs]" (GRAPARD forthcom-

ing). Semiopietas is the esoteric "easy path" (*idō* 易行) to salvation, represented mainly by the *himitsu nenbutsu* 秘密念仏 and *kōmyō shingon* 光明真言 practices. For most of these practices no formal initiation was required—all that was needed was a transmission with simple explanations, usually called *kechien kanjō* 結縁灌頂; furthermore, practices pertaining to semiopietas were considered to be efficacious even when not correctly performed, provided the intention was right, as explained for instance by RENTAI in his *Shingon kaiku-shū*. Since the salvific power of signs is intrinsic to them, the uninformed usage of Mikkyō amulets or talismans (usage that leaves meaning out of consideration) has its theoretical foundation in semiognosis, and is legitimated by the weight of tradition and the idea of an unaltered secret transmission (see also RAMBELLI 1991, pp. 20–21; 1992, pp. 240–42).

Ritual and the adamantine dance

I have claimed that at the background of the various avatars of Tantrism, at least in Japan, lie certain ideas on cosmology and soteriology that possess a semiotic nucleus defining phenomena as manifestations of the Dharmakāya and that—above all—deal with the power of symbolic actions to produce salvation. Mikkyō envisions the cosmos as a fractal structure, in which each phenomenon is "formally" similar to all others and to the totality. This recursive cosmology, unique to Mikkyō, is related to a recursive soteriology that attributes enormous importance to ritual practice and visualization (see ORZECH 1989). One may assume that certain configurations of the Mikkyō episteme lay at the basis of the combinatory doctrines and practices that developed in premodern Japan in a way that was mainly locale-specific and lineage-grounded (GRAPARD 1992).

Allan GRAPARD points to the existence of an "episteme of identity" (1989, p. 182) underlying Japanese mythology and mountain asceticism, an episteme that sees "the world (nature) and words (culture) in the specific lights of similitude, reflection, identity, and communication"; GRAPARD (1989, p. 161) explicitly refers to the preclassical European episteme as reconstructed by Michel Foucault. I suggest that such an "episteme of identity," at least in its more systematic forms, was first codified on the basis of Mikkyō doctrine, and that it then assumed cultural hegemony in medieval Japan. The Mikkyō episteme appears to be characterized by the workings of what Tsuda Shin'ichi calls the "logic of yoga," which asserts the substantial non-differentiation of all things on the basis of concepts of analogy and resemblance. This opens the way, in turn, to a kind of "symbolic omnipotence," based on the belief that ritual—indirect "symbolic" practices—produces numberless powers by virtue of the structure of the signs involved in the ritual process (TSUDA 1978, 1981).[53] It should be clear, however, that such epistemic constructs, far from being simple ritual or meditative escamotages, were directly related to the creation of a ritualized world (closely connected to power and dominant ideology) in which each event and each phenomenon was cosmologically marked and played a salvific function. Moreover, as forms of visualiza-

tion based on a complex semantic and ritual network, symbolic practices grounded on the logic of yoga produced a cognitive transformation; when seriously performed, esoteric practices disclosed a different world.

The logic of yoga thus underlies Shingon ritual practice, which is often despised as a degeneration of "true" Mikkyō by scholars who forget that ritual effort aimed at cosmic integration and political legitimization is a demonstration of the fundamental principles supporting the esoteric episteme. As we have seen, basic to Shingon Mikkyō are its peculiar semiotics and semiosis. Ritual action is not a degeneration of "pure" Mikkyō or a relic of earlier "miscellaneous" forms, as many scholars insist, but is directly related to the postulates of the esoteric episteme itself.[54]

The basic epistemic framework of the Shingon tradition, with its complex interrelations of cosmology, soteriology, semiotics, and ritual, was shared by virtually all esoteric lineages in Japan. It should be stressed, however, that the preceding account applies mainly to those learned monks (*gakuryo* 学侶) who attempted to manifest the esoteric universe through meditation and ritual and who exploited to the utmost degree the power that they attributed to esoteric (or esotericized) signs—a semiotic power that reinforced, and was reinforced by, economic, social, and political power in the framework of a coherent sociocosmic order. It is possible to argue, on the basis of diaries and other textual evidence, that the aristocrats and, to a certain extent, the ordinary people also lived in such an esotericized, ritual universe.[55] They shared the same mentality and ensemble of combinatory beliefs and practices; at the bottom of their way of life was an awareness—rarely discussed explicitly or critically—that the cosmos is an unceasing "adamantine dancing performance" (Raihō, T 77.731a), a continuous transformation of shapes similar to the endless movement of waves on the surface of the sea, governed by linguistically grounded combinatory rules.

This awareness is related to a diffuse heterology/heteropraxy that pervades the entire Indian tradition (and perhaps the entire Buddhist world as well) and emerges from what Iyanaga Nobumi calls "mythologie 'buddhico-ésotérico-śivaïte'."[56] The epistemic aspects of this mentality have been referred to as "Siwaic Semiotics" (Boon 1990, p. 70). Medieval Japanese ideals, rituals, and practices of orthodoxy and identity were thus underlain by a combinative episteme of transformation, in itself an avatar of Indian śivaitic mentality. The epistemic field manifested itself and was actualized in at least two ways: in a fully conscious way through semiognosis, and in a simplified and uninformed way through semiopietas (semiosophia lying outside the "Tantric" mentality). Both paradigms were aimed at esoterically framing the lives of the people, and functioned as powerful means of social control. But when the incessant "adamantine dance" of shifting forms was properly performed and ritually controlled, the esoteric cosmos took on the shape of an immense salvific "machine," where all movements were ritualized and oriented to individual self-realization and universal salvation.

In the above discussion of Mikkyō heterology, I mentioned ambiguous, mar-

ginal, and antisystematic forms of Japanese esoteric Buddhism. These can be seen to represent "Tantric" tendencies aimed at countering the systematic, "mandalic" Mikkyō—Mikkyō as an organic part of the *kenmitsu* system—that I have outlined. These trends, all related in some way to the complex and multifarious *hijiri* phenomenon, attempted to overcome the symbolic nature of the secret practices, or, at least, to exploit them in a quest for a more "direct" salvation, either individual or collective. What follows is a partial list of the most significant of these movements.

The Shingon Ritsu 律 school of Eison and Ninshō attempted to perform bodhisattva practices within an esoteric context; their activities were aimed at bringing concrete relief to suffering beings and, at the same time, at realizing "symbolic"—and therefore indirect—universal salvation. Shingon Ritsu was also very active in controlling and organizing the newly rising forces of social marginality—a potential threat to the *kenmitsu* establishment (see AMINO 1986 and ŌISHI 1987). Shugendō lineages produced new heterodox and syncretic practices and spread them throughout Japan, thus contributing to the diffusion and proliferation of Mikkyō. The Ji 時 movement of Ippen 一遍 (1239–1289) at a certain point was virtually in control of Kōya-san, although its position in the Japanese Tantric field is yet to be analyzed. Tachikawa-ryū, *Genshi kimyōdan* 玄旨帰命壇, and related trends in other schools developed direct practices grounded on the idea of absolute nondualism. The peculiar esoteric quest for paradise, a major esoteric trend since the late Heian period, is interesting because of its attempt to integrate antithetical Shingon and Nenbutsu practices. Finally, the case of *sokushinbutsu* 即身仏—a sublime and disquieting murmur pervading the whole East Asian Buddhist tradition—deserves mention because of the extremes to which the ascetics involved carried the desire to attain direct and universal salvation. The doctrines and activities of these and other movements are not fully compatible with the orthodox Mikkyō discourse that has been outlined here; as a kind of "dark side" to the secret teachings, they require further research.

Notes

An earlier draft of this essay, entitled "Kenmitsu Episteme and Mikkyō Heterology: On the Semiotic Doctrines and Practices in Medieval Japan," was presented at the 45th Annual Meeting of the Association for Asian Studies, Los Angeles, March 1993. I would like to express my gratitude to Mimi Hall Yiengpruksawan, chair of the panel at which it was presented, and the other participants, especially Allan Grapard and Neil McMullin, for their comments and criticism. I wish also to thank Bernard Faure and Yamaguchi Masao. I am greatly indebted to the editors of, and an anonymous reader for, the *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies*, for insightful and valuable suggestions in the process of revising this article.

1 According to Charles Sanders Peirce's definition, a sign is "something which stands to somebody for something in some respect or capacity"—in other words, anything that can be charged with meaning and interpreted.

2 I agree with James BOON, who considers semiotics "less an integral theory than a clearinghouse of issues in the complexity of communicational processes" (1982, p. 116). I see semiotics as an open field of problematics, a network of approaches and theories that can shed light on basic issues of signification and discursive formations.

3 On these subjects, and on the role of Mikkyō ideas and practices in contemporary Japanese magic and religious ritual, see KOMATSU 1988.

4 By the expression "medieval Mikkyō," I mean the totality of the forms taken by esoteric Buddhism from the Insei 院政 age at the end of the Heian period (late eleventh-twelfth centuries) to at least the Nanbokuchō age (early fourteenth century).

5 The founder of the Japanese Shingon sect.

6 The Eight Schools (Kusha 俱舍, Jōjitsu 成実, Ritsu 律, Sanron 三論, Hossō 法相, Kegon 華厳, Tendai 天台, and Shingon) were the Buddhist scholastic traditions officially "imported" from China and acknowledged by the Japanese imperial system. Such traditions as Zen 禅, Jōdo-shū 浄土宗, Jōdo Shinshū 浄土真宗, and Nichiren-shū 日蓮宗 were added in the Middle Ages. The system of the Eight Schools (and its extended versions) constituted the framework within which each sectarian denomination acquired its status and legitimacy.

7 Properly speaking, Shingon has never had a unified center, and a Shingon "sect" does not exist even today. Temples affiliated with the Shingon sectarian denomination belong to either the Kogi 古義 Shingon-shū or the Shingi 新義 Shingon-shū, both of which are further articulated in many sub-branches.

8 Interestingly, BOON sees "a Western parallel" of Tantrism in "that range of hermetic heterodoxies, a murmur of Gnostic, Neoplatonist, crypto-liturgical positions: from freemasons to Bohemians, from counterculture to *poètes maudits*" (1990, p. 165).

9 Although the Tantric field in Japan still needs to be surveyed and charted, I think it constitutes a continuum ranging from clearly "Tantric" positions to formations that could be defined as "tantroid," such as the marginal Pure Land movements known as Ichinengi 一念義 (sometimes related to the radical Tachikawa-ryū 立川流) or the Jishū 時衆 groups often associated with Kōya-san 高野山 and Shingon institutions.

10 This aspect of Japanese Mikkyō has been highlighted, although with different degrees of explicitness, by KOMATSU and NAITŌ 1985, AMINO 1986, MURAYAMA 1987 and 1990, KOMATSU 1988, and NAKAZAWA 1988.

11 Most studies on Mikkyō deal only with Shingon, while most studies on Tendai consider only its non-Tantric aspects. Tantric elements in other traditions have never been studied in depth.

12 For a critical appreciation of *kenmitsu taisei*, see SASAKI 1988, pp. 29–52.

13 Theories delineating the relationship between Tantric and non-Tantric Buddhism.

14 It is possibile to discern in this feature a reversal of the traditional Buddhist outlook, that is, an awareness that mundane and political activities aimed at establishing a Buddhist kingdom and constructing a Buddha-land can be closely related to salvation.

15 The present study deals with the question of orthodoxy in relation to the formation of Shingon discourse; thus the approach taken here differs from that of Kuroda.

16 This, Kuroda argues, is due to the fact that the Tendai tradition (especially the Sanmon 山門 lineages) occupied a hegemonic position during the Japanese Middle Ages. Sasaki Kaoru, on the other hand, indicates that, while Tendai institutions were at the center of the *kenmitsu* system in western Japan, the religious system established by the Kamakura bakufu was essentially based on Zen and Mikkyō, having its roots in the Rinzai 臨済 Zen, Tōji 東寺, and Onjō-ji 園城寺 lineages, as well as in Onmyōdō 陰陽術. SASAKI calls this alternative system the *zenmitsu taisei* 禅密体制 (1988, pp. 94–148).

17 The interaction of Mikkyō and Onmyōdō doctrines and practices in Japan has been described in MURAYAMA (1981, especially pp. 197–241; see also 1987, 1990), HAYAMI 1975, KOMATSU 1988, and KOMATSU and NAITŌ 1985.

18 See Kūkai, *Ben-kenmitsu nikyō-ron* (translated in HAKEDA 1972, pp. 156–57). On the main criteria of Buddhist hermeneutics, see LOPEZ 1988.

19 YAMAGUCHI Masao (1989) has presented an illuminating interpretation of the ambiguous and "marginal" nature of the Japanese emperor. This could explain, at least in part, the political importance of Mikkyō.

20 In the systematic esotericization of Japan and its culture that was carried out during the Middle Ages, geographic space was conceived of as a *maṇḍala*, the Japanese language was identified with the absolute language of the *shingon-darani* 真言陀羅尼, and literary production was assimilated to sacred texts dealing with esoteric truth (this process will be the subject of a later study). An esoteric dimension was attributed also to death (see KAKURAN, *Ichigo taiyō himitsu shū*) and birth (see DAIRYŪ; I am grateful to James Sanford for having brought to my attention this fascinating text).

21 Cases such as that of Kakuban, closely connected to the retired emperor Toba 鳥羽, and Monkan, in the entourage of Emperor Go-Daigo 後醍醐, are well known, Earlier, during the Nara period, esoteric monks such as Genbō and Dōkyō were closely associated with those in political power. On a more orthodox and official level, the Shingon hierarchy has been close to the emperor since 834, when a Shingon chapel, the Shingon-in 真言院, was established inside the Kyoto imperial palace precincts. It is also to be recalled that the development of Mikkyō, first in the early Heian period (ninth century) and later in the Insei age (late eleventh-twelfth centuries), was closely related to more general restructurings of the Japanese political, social, and economic order.

22 On the cultural role of marginality and its relationship with the center, and on the principle of exclusion in Japanese culture, see YAMAGUGHI 1975.

23 On the *hijiri*, see GORAI 1975; SATÒ 1987; SASAKI 1988.

24 See Kūkai, *Shōji jissōgi, Bonji shittan jimo narabini shakugi*; see also RAMBELLI 1992 and 1994.

25 More recently, TSUDA (1978) has expressed doubts that the two fundamental texts of the Shingon tradition, the *Dari jing* (Jpn. *Dainichi-kyō*) and the *Jinggang ding jing* (Jpn. *Kongōchō-kyō*), can be integrated into a single and noncontradictory system. According to Tsuda, these two texts epitomize two cosmologies and soteriologies (those of Mahāyāna and those of Tantric Buddhism) that exist in a "critical" relation to each other, i.e., that are completely different and incompatible. TSUDA, interestingly, refers to Tokuitsu's criticism (1985, pp. 89–91). It should be stressed, however, that Mikkyō, far from being reducible to the *Dari jing* and the *Jinggang ding jing*, comprises a complex intertext of commentaries on and explanations of both sūtras, plus numerous other texts that lack direct relations to them. On a still deeper level, one can recognize a diffuse set of non-systematic knowledge and ritual actions, many of which are not clearly supported by textual authorities.

26 He directly tackled only Tokuitsu's eleventh doubt, concerning the Iron Stūpa where Nāgārjuna, the human patriarch of Mikkyō, was initiated by Vajrasattva into the esoteric teachings (KŪKAI, *Himitsu mandarakyō fuhōden*).

27 The efforts of esoteric monks like Genbō toward establishing the Kokubun-ji 国分寺 system of state-run provincial temples indicate the importance of Mikkyō in the formation of Nara State Buddhism (see HAYAMI 1975, pp. 4–5).

28 Even the origin of the terms *zōmitsu* and *junmitsu* is obscure, and presumably quite late; according to MISAKI (1988, pp. 146–47), the first person to use the words was Ekō 慧光 (1666–1734). On the mystifications in the traditional sectarian treatment of the *junmitsuzōmitsu* distinctions, see ORZECH 1989 (especially pp. 88–92), and MISAKI 1988.

29 Bukong 不空 (705–774), a Tang *ācārya* with direct lineal contacts with Kūkai.

30 For instance, a sūtra such as the *Suxidi-jieluo-jing* 蘇悉地羯羅経 is included among the

precepts and regulations; the *Dari jing* does not conform to the classificatory criteria, containing as it does many explicit references to *genze riyaku* 現世利益; texts that are not sūtras (i.e., that do not contain doctrinal elements and concern *genze riyaku*) are included in the Diamond textual lineage (MISAKI 1988, pp. 150–52). In general, the Shingon school appears to have followed Amoghavajra's method of including into the Diamond lineage authoritative (and useful) texts and rituals of miscellaneous origin.

31 See, for instance, MISAKI's analysis of the classification proposed by Gōhō 杲宝 (1306–1362), the great scholar monk of Tō-ji 東寺 (1988, pp. 157–58), and Yūkai's 宥快 (1345–1416) attempt as described in MD (s.v. *Ryōbu zōbu*: 2284).

32 The first link in the chain of the secret transmission of Mikkyō doctrines and practices is Dainichi Nyorai. In order to stress that these teachings were born in the self-presence of the Dharmakāya and are themselves unconditioned, a myth of an original ostension was created in which the esoteric sūtras and maṇḍalas appeared in the sky to Nāgārjuna, who faithfully copied them and handed them down to later disciples. The myth of the manifestation in the sky, perhaps of Daoist origin, expressed the idea that the esoteric transmission transcended the arbitrariness of signs, conditioned cultural codes, and ordinary semiotic strategies. See also RAMBELLI 1991, pp. 20–21.

33 Various Mikkyō texts (like the *Lueshu jinggangding yuqie fenbie shengwei xiuzheng famen*) developed their own hermeneutics, thus confronting the Buddhist establishment. In any event, Mahāyāna texts already dealt with the *ken-mitsu* distinction, although in a different way (see, for instance, the *Jie shenmi jing*). A major source of Kūkai's thought on the matter was the *Shi moheyan lun* (Jpn. *Shaku makaen ron*).

34 Such a hermeneutical reversal is most evident in KAKUBAN's *Gorin kuji myō himitsu shahu*, where all Buddhist schools and all religious traditions are explicitly envisioned as steps on the path toward the attainment of esoteric goals. In this manner, all salvational endeavors became parts of a Mikkyō soteric framework. On *panjiao* hermeneutics, see LOPEZ 1988.

35 Kūkai, *Ben-kenmitsu nikyā-ron*, KDZ 1, 482; RAIYU, *Shashū kyōri dōi shaku*, DNBZ 29: 5a–b. According to the *Dari jing*, the essence of the Shingon teachings is to be found where "the way of language is interrupted and mental activity also vanishes. It is a realm comprehensible only in the communication between buddhas" (T #848, 18.9b).

36 The texts are, respectively: KŪKAI, *Ben-kenmitsu nikyō-ron*; KAKUBAN, *Kenmitsu fudō ju* and *Gorin kuji myō himitsu-shahu*; and RAIHO, *Shingon myōmoku*. Each author stresses different aspects of the *kenmitsu* paradigm, in accordance with the main trends of debate in his time. Kūkai is especially concerned with the uniqueness of Mikkyō in relation to the other schools, Kakuban underlines the absolute character of the esoteric teachings and shows how they transcend the idea of *mappō*, and Raihō emphasizes the essentially enlightened nature of all things.

37 This is the well-known principle of *hosshin seppō* 法身説法 (the Dharmakāya's preaching), one of the products of Kūkai's systematizing genius. It is a perfect model of absolute communication characterized by total circularity. For a semiotic analysis, see RAMBELLI 1994.

38 The concept of *mappō*, though not referred to in Kūkai's texts, became of major importance in Japanese culture after the eleventh century. Kakuban stressed the negation of *mappō* as one of the characteristics of Mikkyō, emphasizing its unconditioned nature and soteric power.

39 This idea probably resulted from the identification of the linguistic thought of the *Shi moheyan lun* (605b) with dharanic conceptions and practices.

40 Nara schools were particularly sensitive on this point. The Six Schools taught that the differences between Śākyamuni and Mahāvairocana are dissolved in the meta-level of

absolute reality (although Shingon Mikkyō proposed itself as that very meta-level). They also recognized that Mikkyō, as a part of Buddhism, is an offspring of Śākyamuni's enlightenment, the esoteric teachings being the secret doctrines taught by Śākyamuni upon entering Mahāvairocana's *samādhi*. For a direct account of the Nara approach to Mikkyō, see GYŌNEN.

41 The different conceptions of *ri* and *ji* are the main theme of RAIYU's *Shoshū kyōri dōi shaku*, a contrastive analysis of Shingon and the Mahāyāna schools.

42 See for instance KAKUBAN's *Kenmitsu fudō ju*, in particular the following verses: "*Ken* teachings explain the initial stage [of practice leading to Buddhahood (*inbun* 因分)], *mits'n* teachings explain the final stage [of attainment of Buddhahood 成仏 (*kabun* 果分)]": "*Ken* principle (*ri*) has no relationship with the sense organs [*rokkon* 六根, *mitsu* sees them as the Four [Buddha-] bodies [*shishin* 四身]; *ken* principle has no relationship with objects [*rokkyō* 六境], *mitsu* sees them as the Three Adamantine Mysteries [*san(mitsu) kon(gō)* 三(密)金(剛))]; *ken* principle has no relationship to mind apparatus [*rokushiki* 六識], *mitsu* knows them to be the universal wisdom of the Dharmakāya"; "*Ken* principle has neither signs [*sō* 相] nor activities [*yū* 用], *mitsu* Tathatā [(*shin*) *nyo* ((眞)如] is endowed with substance-signs-dynamic manifestations [*sandai* 三大]." On the *sandai* doctrine, see RAMDELLI 1991, pp. 4–5.

43 These have traditionally been the objects of inquiry of two different disciplines: the history of ideas, and anthropology. For a critical presentation of some theoretical positions concerning the meaning of "popular" religion in East Asia, see FAURE 1991, pp. 79–95.

44 On the importance of re-creating the original context of mantras, see LOPEZ 1990, pp. 369–72.

45 I am indebted here to Allan Grapard's threefold categorization of the orders of significance in Japanese representations of sacred space (geosophia, geognosis, and geopiety) (forthcoming).

46 It is very difficult to evaluate the role of common sense in ideas and practices relating to signs in the esoteric episteme, especially in light of the almost total lack of research on this subject. Buddhist *setsuwa* 説話 collections, for instance, suggest that signs are clues to a hidden reality and at the same time instruments for action: they not only foretell and express events but also give rise to them (see RAMBELLI 1990). It is not clear, however, whether these texts reflected widespread popular ideas on signs and semiosis or were vehicles for the diffusion of a new, Buddhist-continental semiotic mentality.

47 According to Kakuban, without the superficial interpretation of signs (*jisō* 字相), the deeper truth (*jigi* 字義) cannot be conveyed, but the esoteric truth cannot be taught to people lacking the status or the capacity to receive it—this is why it is called "secret" (*himitsu* 秘密.

48 Kūkai equates the *monji* 文字 (expressive symbols, signs) of the "Dharmakāya's preaching" (*hosshin seppō*) with the three mysteries (*sanmitsu*) pervading the Dharmadhatu; thus language and signs (*sōdai*) cannot exist separately from the cosmic substratum (*taidai*) of original enlightenment. Kūkai then adds: "Therefore Dainichi Nyorai, by expounding the meaning of [the relations between] language and reality, arouses sentient beings from their long slumber." Mikkyō semiotics thus has a direct soteric relevance: "Those who realize this are called Great Enlightened Ones, those who are confused about it are called 'sentient beings' " (*Shōji jissō-gi*, 401c). See also RAMBELLI 1992, pp. 163–85; and 1994.

49 On mantric expressions as inscriptions of soteriology, see LOPEZ 1990. For an analysis of Shingon inscription strategies, see RAMBELLI 1991 and 1992 (pp. 249–55; 265–70; 296–316).

50 See RAMBELLI 1992 and GRAPARD 1987. Another vivid example of these combinatory

practices can be found in Dairyū's *Sangai isshin-ki*, where the stages of the human embryo are associated to the Thirteen Buddhas via various operations on their names.

51 The absolute value of phenomena and particularities—i.e., of differences—is one of the major themes of most exoteric and esoteric *hongaku* (original enlightenment) texts from the middle Kamakura period; for an introductory account of this subject, see RAMBELLI 1993, Concerning the plural nature of Tantric symbols and entities, see BOON 1990, pp. 79–83.

52 Recent discoveries have revealed the existence of an esoteric genre of *sctsuwa* literature, an example of which is the *Aizen ō shōryū-ki* 愛染王紹隆記 in KUSHIDA 1979, pp. 819–41.

53 It should be noticed, however, that my treatment of these subjects is different in perspective and approach from that of Tsuda, which lacks explicit semiotic and ideological concerns.

54 Since the present essay is concerned mainly with the formation of the epistemic space and the conditions of possibility in the Japanese esoteric Buddhist discourse, all-important questions concerning ritual practice have remained in the background. Epistemic problems of esoteric rituals, such as the ritual manipulation of symbolic entities, will be the subject of a future study.

55 Their lives were probably similar in structure and basic attitudes to that of Jinson 尋尊 (1430–1508), abbot of the Daijō-in *monzeki* 大乗院門跡 of the Kasuga-Kōfuku-ji 春日興福寺 complex, as it has been portrayed by Allan GRAPARD (1992, pp. 171–85). GRAPARD explains: "To Jinson, the mirrorlike relation between the heavenly bureaucracy and the structure of the [Kasuga-Kōfukuji] multiplex and of society in general was the manifestation of a preestablished harmony that could never be discussed, even less called into doubt. Such preestablished harmony, however, grounded though it may have been in myth and supported by ritual, needed another type of reinforcement . . . provided by economic power and, more precisely, land" (p. 174).

56 Personal communication, 6 April 1993. For a masterful description of the workings of such a mythology, see IYANAGA 1994.

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THE JO-NAṄ-PAS, A SCHOOL OF BUDDHIST ONTOLOGISTS ACCORDING TO THE *GRUB MTHA' ŠEL GYI ME LOṄ*[1]

D.S. Ruegg

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In the history of Buddhist philosophy in India and Tibet an extreme and somewhat isolated position was occupied by the Jo naṅ pa school which flourished in Tibet from about the thirteenth to the seventeenth century. Amongst the earlier Indian Buddhist schools a perhaps comparable tendency towards ontological and metaphysical development is probably to be found in the *pudgalavāda* of the Vātsīputrīyas; but the exact significance of this *pudgala* or personal element which is indeterminable (*avācya*) in relation to the Aggregates (*skandha*) remains somewhat uncertain owing to the lack of original texts belonging to this school which might be expected to explain its meaning clearly and fully.[1a] Somewhat later, on the other hand, one at least of Dignāga's writings, the *Traikālyaparīkṣā*, exhibits a rather remarkable ontological tendency which was however repudiated in his *Pramāṇasamuccaya*.[1b]

To judge by the accounts of their doctrines given by their critics, the Jo naṅ pa masters took up a specifically ontological and hence apparently un-Buddhist position by accepting in quite literal terms what appears as an eternal (*nitya, śāśvata*) and stable (*dhruva*) element. They taught also a theory of the absolute Gnosis (*ye šes, jñāna*), undifferentiated between apprehender and apprehended (*grāhya-grāhaka: gzuṅ 'dsin gñis med kyi ye šes mthar thug pa*), which is constant or permanent (*nitya*) and 'substantially' real (*rtag dṅos; ṅo bo rtag pa; raṅ byuṅ du grub pa*; etc.) and which is the *pariniṣpanna* or Absolute. Their fundamental doctrine was the Void-of-the-other (*gžan stoṅ*), that is, an absolute which is established in reality and is Void of all heterogeneous relative and phenomenal factors, as against the Void-of-Own-being (*raṅ stoṅ; svabhāvaśūnya*) of the Mādhyamika which the Jo naṅ pas considered to be a merely preliminary or lower doctrine bearing on the relative (*saṃvṛti*) and not on the absolute Meaning (*paramārtha*). Although the Jo naṅ pas none the less considered themselves to

be true Mādhyamikas, the Tibetan Mādhyamikas who follow Candrakīrti—in other words the majority of Tibetan scholars—resolutely oppose and refute their theories.

Certain authorities also compare the theory of the Jo naṅ pas, and after them of the unorthodox Sa skya pa doctor Šākya mchog ldan (1428–1507), concerning the Void-of-the-other with the explanation the author of the *Bṛhaṭṭīkā* gives of the *pariniṣpanna* as being Void of the discursive and phenomenal represented by the 'imagined' (*parikalpita*) and the 'relative' (*paratantra*).[2] According to the orthodox Yogācāras on the other hand, the *paratantra* Void of the *parikalpita* is the *pariniṣpannalakṣaṇa*.[2a]

To substantiate their particular interpretation the Jo naṅ pa masters referred to a group of canonical texts known as the 'Sūtras teaching the Essence' (*sñiṅ po*) which includes the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*, the *Śrīmālādevīsiṃhanādasūtra* and the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra*. At the same time the Kālacakra constituted one of their principal sources. And amongst Śāstra works they referred especially to the Stotra collection attributed to Nāgārjuna. It can thus be said that their doctrine represents an admixture of the *mantra* method and of the intuition achieved through practice-in-meditation (*bhāvanā*) of the Kālacakra with the Sūtra and philosophical method chiefly founded on the group of Sūtras just mentioned. And it was just this contestable mixture of the two methods of 'metaphysics' (*mtshan ñid*) and mysticism that called forth many of the criticisms directed against their doctrines by doctors who did not reject the validity and authenticity of their intuition and understanding as such.

Thus, not only did the Jo naṅ pas have a tendency to hypostasize reality, but they were also thought to have as it were mixed their metaphors by combining together systems of expression belonging to different traditions. These traditions and their symbolical systems are all nonetheless generally held to be valid in their own domains; and only a few authorities, notably Red mda' ba (1349–1412), actually opposed the Kālacakra and the Ṣaḍaṅgayoga—perhaps much in the same way as Sa skya paṇḍita (1182–1251) did the later Tibetan *phyag rgya chen po* or *mahāmudrā* system—for introducing into the well authenticated and in themselves complete methods of the great Buddhist masters extraneous and not easily verifiable notions and terms.

Another problem of fundamental and far-reaching importance was posed by the method a particular school adopted to explain the Sūtras; and the application of the criteria by means of which intentional canonical texts whose meaning has to be interpreted (*neyārtha* texts) can be correctly explained and distinguished from other canonical texts of definitive meaning (*nītārtha*) was thus the subject of much discussion. Various solutions were advanced by the different schools which depended on their understanding of the basic doctrines of Buddhism. The Jo naṅ pas, unlike many of their contemporaries, considered that the 'Sūtras teaching the Essence' were of definitive and certain meaning. And in accordance with this view they elaborated their characteristic doctrine of the *gžan stoṅ*, which they linked with the *ādibuddha* doctrine of the Kālacakra.

While underlining this remarkable and rather extreme position amongst Buddhist schools occupied by the Jo naṅ pas, it is also necessary to consider them both as one of the most renowned and as one of the most controversial of the Tibetan schools during a period of several centuries.

As the author of the *Grub mtha' šel gyi me loṅ* informs us, at first, in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, they appeared closely linked with the Sa skya pas, only becoming clearly distinct after their doctrines had become the object of a formal philosophical presentation, for which Dol bu pa was chiefly responsible. But since both the Sa skya pa and Jo naṅ pa schools had their centres in gTsaṅ province and since at this time the Sa skya pas were perhaps the dominant force in Tibet (though very closely rivalled by some of the bKa' brgyud pa sects), this connexion may have even earlier been above all geographical and due to the fact that the Jo naṅ pa masters had usually studied in the chief monastic colleges which belonged to the Sa skya pas. This is the impression conveyed at least by the passage from the *Kha skoṅ* of the Ṅor pa chos 'byuṅ quoted below. At all events, theories accepted by the Jo naṅ pas were rejected by Sa skya paṇḍita in his *sDom gsum rab dbye*.

A connexion also existed between the Jo naṅ pas on the one side and on the other Bu ston (1290–1364) and the Ža lu pa school owing no doubt in part to their common interest in the Kālacakra; in fact, according to the *ThG*, the Jo naṅ pa master Phyogs las rnam rgyal studied under Bu ston. But from the point of view of *mtshan ñid* or philosophical method their doctrine of the *gžan stoṅ* and of the *tathāgatagarbha* was refuted both by Bu ston and his great disciple sGra tshad pa Rin chen rnam rgyal. It is nevertheless to be noted that in his *mDses rgyan* they are not attacked by name; and if Padma dkar po states in his *Chos 'byuṅ* that Bu ston refused to discuss publicly with Dol bu pa when the latter came to see him for that purpose, this may have been because he did not wish to engage in open controversy with teachers who were regarded with great respect. A Sa skya pa authority, Ṅag dbaṅ chos grags, states that whereas Bu ston held that the *dharmadhātu* though real is non-existent in reality (*bden par med*), Dol bu pa proposed the thesis: The *dharmadhātu* as the subject of the proposition will exist in reality because it is real.[3]

Reference has furthermore sometimes been made to a connexion between the Jo naṅ pa and bKa' brgyud pa schools.[4] This does not appear to be clearly borne out by the present chapter of the *ThG*, though this text does indicate that the *gžan stoṅ* and the *mahāmudrā* are in certain respects comparable. Certain teachers of the Karma pa sect of the bKa' brgyud pas however proposed an interpretation of the *śūnyatā*, the absolute Gnosis and the *tathāgatagarbha* that was close to the Jo naṅ pa doctrine.[5]

While the question of the affiliations of the Jo naṅ pas with the other Tibetan schools clearly requires much further study, it thus seems correct to say that they were to begin with closely connected with the Sa skya pas; however, their doctrines differed from those of most of the Sa skya pa doctors. An exception was Šākya mchog ldan, whose theory of the *śūnyatā* agreed with the Jo naṅ pa

theory; for this reason his theories are often discussed together with theirs, as is done at the end of the present chapter of the *ThG*.

The above very brief sketch of some of the philosophical problems posed by the Jo naṅ pa school should at least be sufficient to reveal their great importance, and also to show that it is scarcely adequate to characterize them as representing chiefly 'tantristische Zauberlehren.' Opinions may perhaps differ as to whether the Kālacakra, which (as seen above) was one of the pillars of their theory, was above all a magical teaching or not; but the Jo naṅ pa analysis of the mind (*sems*), of the Gnosis (*ye šes*) and of *śūnyatā* as the *gžan stoṅ* clearly bears witness to a very deep concern with the soteriological, metaphysical, epistemological and psychological problems which interested philosophers in general. That doctrines closely allied with the *gžan stoṅ* were also accepted by at least some bKa' brgyud pa and rÑiṅ ma pa scholars would indicate that the Jo naṅ pa masters were not altogether isolated.[6]

The apparently very close relationship of the Jo naṅ pas with both Indian teachings and Indian teachers is also notable. It has even led one scholar to speak of 'Brahmanists' in Tibet.[7] The originator and source of their doctrines, Yu mo, is indeed said to have received his doctrine at Kailāsa;[8] and the chief systematizer of their doctrines, Dol bu pa (also known as Dol po pa) šes rab rgyal mtshan, must have come from the Dol po region near the frontier of Nepal.[8a] And such links then continued up to the time of the suppression of the school in the seventeenth century. For at that time Tāranātha was in close contact with Nepālese and Indian paṇḍits;[9] and the wall-paintings he had executed in the Phun tshogs gliṅ temple are reminiscent of certain Indian schools of painting, includingly curiously enough to a certain extent even the modern Bengāl school.[10]

The history of the Jo naṅ pa school may perhaps at the same time be explained, at least to a certain extent, by factors in the history of gTsaṅ. Under the Sa skya pas this province had for a long time assumed a preponderant position in Tibet. Separatist tendencies were later strongly asserted by the princes of Rin spuṅs, some of whom, though connected principally with the Karma pas and more specifically with the Žva dmar hierarchs, also patronized the Jo naṅ pas. In fact the *ThG* links the decline of the Jo naṅ pas with the downfall of Karma bsTan skyoṅ dbaṅ po, the last of the Rin spuṅs princes, who was defeated in 1642 by Gu šri Khan on behalf of the fifth Dalai Lama.[11] Given these circumstances, it may then be pertinent to consider the possibility that the Jo naṅ pa school was proscribed at the time of the fifth Dalai Lama both because of the unorthodoxy of its teachings and because of some Himālayan and ultramontane connexions which might have tended to sustain local separatist movements in the south-western areas of Tibet in which they were chiefly established. At all events it is known that the Jo naṅ pa centres in gTsaṅ were at that time converted to the dGe lugs pa order; and the only monasteries that survived were, according to the *ThG*, to be found in eastern Tibet.[12] At that time also the line of incarnations to which Tāranātha himself belonged was transferred to Mongolia,

where it was recognized as the line of the Khal kha rje btsun dam pa of Da Khu re (or Hu re chen mo, Urga) which continued into the present century.[13] Tāranātha was thus the last great representative of the school.

The circumstances of this radical dispossession of the Jo naṅ pas in the middle of the seventeenth century however present a sharp contrast with the fact that two and a half centuries earlier two of Tsoṅ kha pa's teachers, Phyogs las rnam rgyal and Ña dbon Kun dga' dpal, had belonged to this school. And, although Tsoṅ kha pa came to disagree with their teachings and despite the fact that their tenets thus form many of the *pūrvapakṣas* refuted in the *Legs bšad sñiṅ po* for example, the masters of this school continued to be respected. An authority like Guṅ thaṅ dKon mchog bsTan pa'i sgron me, though always rigorously opposing the unorthodox scholastic exposition of their doctrines, admits that Dol bu pa's spiritual intuition was very profound and that he was 'a not inferior omniscient being because of his comprehension[14] and, as the closing lines of the present chapter devoted to them in the *ThG* clearly indicate, the author, Blo bzaṅ chos kyi ñi ma, does not condemn them out of hand.

* * *

As a contribution to the study of the history and doctrines of the Jo naṅ pas as well as of the criticisms of their interpretations made by masters of the other schools of Tibetan Buddhism a translation is offered here of the sixth chapter of the History of Philosophical Doctrines (*Grub mtha' šel gyi me loṅ*).[15] Completed in 1801 by Thu'u bkvan Blo bzaṅ chos kyi ñi ma, this work contains a valuable if brief account of the history of the school together with notices on the lives of many of their most important teachers followed by a short outline of their doctrines and a refutation of them according to the Prāsaṅgika-Mādhyamika method of the dGe lugs pas.[16]

In this critique the author first shows that the Jo naṅ pa doctrines are in several respects comparable to the doctrines of the Brāhmaṇical schools and that they are consequently open to the same criticisms to which the latter were subjected by the great Buddhist teachers of India and Tibet. Thus their doctrine is first of all found to resemble that of the Word-brahman advocated by the Śabdabrahmavādins such as Bhartṛhari; and the first *kārikā* of the latter's *Vākyapadīya* is quoted according to which the *śabdabrahman* appears as the objective world (*arthabhāva*) and the source of mundane differentiated construction (*prakriyā jagataḥ*). It is then shown how the participation and involvement of the Absolute in the cycle-of-existences (*saṃsāra*) also results from the Jo naṅ pa theory of an eternal and immutable element of potential Awakening inherent in every being in the saṃsāric condition. It is also to be noted that the tendency towards an ontological position—or at least towards an ontological formulation of a doctrine—which, as mentioned above, appears in the case of Dignāga is also connected with the *Vākyapadīya*; for Dignāga's *Traikālyaparīkṣā* is essentially an only slightly modified version of verses taken mostly from Bhartṛhari's *Prakīrṇakakāṇḍa* (3. 3. 53–85).[17]

It is next explained that the Jo naṅ pa doctrines are similar to those of the Sāṃkhya inasmuch as they assume what amounts to a kind of inherent liberation existing continuously from the outset in every *puruṣa* or being. But, as the author of the *ThG* shows at some length, such an interpretation has been explicitly rejected in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* itself in its presentation of the *tathāgatagarbha* doctrine. Similarities are also pointed out in the *ThG* between the logical consequences of the Jo naṅ pa theories and some Mīmāṃsaka and early Vedāntin doctrines; as regards the latter, it is also to be noted that the relative world is said to be an erroneous illusory appearance (*'khrul snaṅ* [bhrānta-ābhāsa ?], but not *māyā*).[18]

The *ThG* moreover briefly indicates how the Jo naṅ pa theory is in conflict with the basic doctrine of the Buddha, for it inevitably leads both to a 'nihilistic' and to an 'eternalistic' position—*ucchedavāda* and *śāśvatavāda*—, the two extremes which the teaching of the middle path avoids. Contradictions are also pointed out with the teaching of Nāgārjuna; and it is explained that the *Dharmadhātustotra* is to be interpreted in the sense of the *Mādhyamikakārikās*.

A list is then given of the chief refutations of the Jo naṅ pa doctrines composed by scholars of various schools. And reference is also made to some comparable points in the doctrine of the famous but unorthodox Sa skya pa scholar šākya mchog ldan.

The Jo naṅ pa chapter of the *ThG* does not however close on an exclusively polemical note; for, while rigorously combatting their unorthodox teachings which conflict with the Mādhyamika, Blo bzaṅ chos kyi ñi ma also pays tribute to the part played by their masters in transmitting instructions in the Kālacakra.

Translation[18a]

> Here begins the discourse concerning the history of what is known as the Jo naṅ pa doctrine,
> The way opened up wide by Dol bu pa, the white banner renowned as the Omniscient One who made the entire assembly of scholars tremble greatly.

The sixth chapter of the *Grub mtha' šel gyi me loṅ* on the history of the Jo naṅ pa doctrine contains three sections: 1, the history of the doctrine; 2, the doctrinal method of the *gžan stoṅ* theory according to their system; and 3, the demonstration that this this theory is bad.

1. The history of the doctrine

The anchorite Thugs rje brtson 'grus[19] founded a monastery at Jo mo naṅ. After Dol bu pa had settled there, the doctrine spread widely; and subsequently those who maintained this tradition received the name of Jo naṅ pas.

Yu mo Mi bskyod rdo rje[20] was the originator of the Jo naṅ pa doctrine. At first a yogin, he later became a monk with the name of Dad pa rgyal po. He attended on many spiritual-superiors including Sog 'dul 'dsin; and [2a] he heard some teachings from Somanātha, the great paṇḍit from Kaśmīr.[21] From Somanātha's disciple sGro ston gNam la brtsegs[22] he heard in detail the *Tantravṛtti* [the Vimalaprabhā] of the Kālacakra together with its *upadeśa*, as well as the *Pradīpoddyotana* [of the Guhyasamāja] together with its *upadeśa*. He then went to 'U yug and achieved intuitive-comprehension (:*adhigama*) by means of realization-in-meditation (*bhāvanā*); and the *gžan stoṅ* theory appeared in his mind. As a master of abhijñā he was very well known as an adept (*siddha*), for he many times manifested many transformations-through-artifice in the shape of a crow, a magpie and so forth. He also composed some manuals on the Kālacakra. He died at the age of 82 [i.e. in his 82nd year].

The chief of his many disciples was his son Dharmeśvara.[23] Up to the age of twenty he mastered all the texts and the traditional instructions belonging to the great adept. And, attending on many scholars, he cultivated above all the Mādhyamika and logic, the Guhyasamāja, and the Kālacakra [2b]. Fully endowed as he was with transcending discriminative knowledge (*prajñā*), he is known as the manifestation of Mañjuśrī. Several of his teachings are extant.

His great disciple was Nam mkha' 'od zer; and the latter's pupil was Dharmeśvara's son Se mo che ba Nam mkha' rgyal mtshan.[24] Next came 'Jam gsar šes rab 'od zer.[25] It is said that until then the scripture (*āgama*) of the Kālacakra was limited (in its diffusion),[26] but that after 'Jam gsar the teaching became generalized.

The latter's pupil was the omniscient Chos sku 'od zer.[27] His pupil was the anchorite Thugs rje brtson 'grus who composed a treatise on the sByor drug (Ṣaḍaṅgayoga). His pupil was Byaṅ sems rGyal be ye šes.[28] Yon tan rgya mtsho, learned and reverend, was the pupil of the last two masters;[29] and his disciple was Dol bu pa šes rab rgyal mtshan, known as the Omniscient.[30]

Dol bu pa listened extensively to the Sūtra and Tantra doctrines under more than thirty masters, and he studied in detail Pāramitā, logic and Abhidharma under sKyi ston 'Jam dbyaṅs grags pa rgyal mtshan.[31] He then held philosophical discussions in the provinces of dBus and gTsaṅ and became very well known as a scholar. From sKyi ston he heard all the Mantra instructions such as the Consecration (*abhiṣeka*) itself and about seventy ancillary indications. He received the bhikṣu's ordination from the great *ācārya* of Chos luṅ tshogs pa, bSod nams grags pa.[32]

Until then he had been a follower of the Sa skya pa doctrine; but at the age of 31 he went to Jo mo naṅ and heard many Consecrations and instructions, and above all the *dbaṅ khrid* of the Kālacakra, from the learned and reverend Yon tan rgya mtsho [3a]. Henceforth he followed the doctrinal tradition of the Jo naṅ pas; and through his realization-in-meditation of the Ṣaḍaṅgayoga the sign of perfect *prāṇāyāma* appeared.[33] He then occupied the abbatial seat of Jo naṅ and constructed the great *sku 'bum*.[34]

At that time he ascertained completely the theory of the *gžan stoṅ*; and he composed a treatise devoted to it called the *Ri chos ṅes don rgya mtsho*. Hence it is said that, a mountain having been heaped up, the ocean flowed forth.[35] To many scholars he preached chiefly the exposition of the *Tantra-vṛtti* of the Kālacakra and the *gžan stoṅ* theory. He showed signs of spiritual realization, such as the vision of the countenances of many divinities and the simultaneous manifestation of three bodily dispositions (:*vyūha*); and he fully accomplished the tasks of the scholar by conferring on many pupils the texts, expositions and instructions of Sūtra and Tantra and by composing treatises. In general more than 2000 religious and about 1000 adepts gathered together; and it is related for example that mChims Blo bzaṅ grags pa perceived him in the form of Avalokiteśvara while his disciple (*antevāsin*) Nam mkha' byaṅ chub perceived him in the form of Mañjughoṣa.

Amongst the numberless disciples who came to him, the translator Blo gros dpal[36] and Sa bzaṅ Mati paṇ chen[37] became his spiritual sons. Phyogs las rnam rgyal and many other scholars [3b] who preserved the continuity of Action (*'phrin las*: *kāritra*) also came to him.

Phyogs rgyal ba[38] after having made his studies at Sa skya became a great scholar. At first he did not accept the *gžan stoṅ* theory; but when the great Dol bu pa gave a discourse on the scriptural tradition and reasoning on the occasion of a discussion at Jo naṅ, he felt no disturbance and became his disciple. He heard in their entirety numerous expositions of Sūtra and Mantra, and above all the *dbaṅ khrid* of the Kālacakra. He also requested many teachings from the omniscient Bu ston. He was Master of the law (*chos dpon*) at Ṅam riṅs,[39] and he composed many treatises on Pāramitā and logic.

The great scholar Ña dbon Kun dga' dpal arrived in order to become his disciple.[40] And the omniscient master Tsoṅ kha pa also heard the Kālacakra from Phyogs rgyal ba, as well as the Pāramitā from Ña dbon.

Subsequently the current of the consecration and explanation of the Kālacakra received a very wide diffusion. But the *gžan stoṅ* theory was unanimously refuted by numerous scholars and adepts, and it became weak.

However, Jo naṅ Kun dga' grol mchog[41] and in particular the rebirth of the *grol mchog*, Tāranātha, later revived it, spread its explanation, and composed many treatises. The latter founded the rTag brtan phun tshogs gliṅ and established unprecedented Supports (*rten*), and he made prints of many treatises belonging to the Jo naṅ system.[42] Many religious assembled there.

Because the chief of Rin spuṅs, Prince Karma bstan skyoṅ, became the patron some lustre was imparted to the two Systems [spiritual and temporal]. Soon afterwards the Rin spuṅs power declined;[42a] and after Tāranātha's death, the *goṅ sa* Great Fifth [4a] converted the monastery to the dGe lugs pa and he named it dGa' ldan phun tshogs gliṅ.[43] The other Jo naṅ pa monasteries—Chos luṅ byaṅ rtse and the rest—were equally changed into dGe lugs pa ones, and the majority of the xylographs of their scriptures were sequestred and sealed. Except that mention is made of a monastery in mDo khams Dsam thaṅ which was

founded by Jo naṅ kun mkhyen's [i.e. Dol bu pa's] pupil's pupil,[44] the *druṅ* and *dka' bźi pa* Rin chen dpal, and of some monasteries which are its dependents, at the present time no foundation maintaining the Jo naṅ doctrine exists in dBus or gTsaṅ.[45]

And, with the sole exception of the *sGrub thabs rin chen 'byuṅ gnas*,[46] the streams of religion of Jo naṅ have disappeared (literally: have become a rainbow-body).

* * *

The source of the *gźan stoṅ* doctrine originated with Yu mo Mi bskyod rdo rje. When he realized-in-meditation the Ṣaḍaṅgayoga of the Kālacakra, the divine Body image of Void-form (*stoṅ gzugs kyi lha'i sku rnam pa*) arose from within and constituted the basis of misapprehension.[47] Relying only on the letter of Sūtras of indirect meaning (*neyārtha*) as well as on some Tantras, he taught that the *gźan stoṅ*, the truth of absolute-Meaning (*paramārthasalya*), permanent, stable and eternal, pervading all that is static and mobile, is identical with the sugatagarbha and exists in the Existential-Nature of Foundation (*gźi'i gnas lugs la yod pa*). As a result of spiritual practice employing the graded method of the six Yogas, there arose in his conception this mass of contradiction in the direct-apprehension of the *dharmatā*-Body which is the Result; and he named it the theory of the *gźan stoṅ*. And mixing with it the practical instruction (*khrid*) on the Kālacakra, he expounded it as a hidden doctrine (*lkog pa'i chos*).

This explanation was transmitted from disciple to disciple down to Dol bu pa śes rab [4b] rgyal mtshan. However, there had hitherto existed no manual devoted especially to this doctrine, but only oral indications; and because the masters who upheld this doctrinal tradition were solely Yogins who had only good spiritual experiences, they had not made detailed expositions to demonstrate the scriptural tradition and arguments. Hence they were not well known.

Dol bu pa composed a treatise expounding this theory called the *Ṅes don rgya mtsho*, as well as many opuscules such as the *bKa' bsdu bźi pa*.[48] After having made several demonstrations of the scriptural tradition and the arguments, he established the doctrine (*siddhānta*) known as the 'theory of the *gźan stoṅ* of absolute-Meaning.'

Following him Phyogs las rnam rgyal composed the large and the small *'Khrul 'joms*. And Ña dbon Kun dga' dpal composed the *Grub mtha' 'od gsal rgyan*, etc.

Subsequently the theory and doctrine of the Jo naṅ pas became very well known.

2. The doctrinal method of the gźan stoṅ *theory*

In the *Ṅes don rgya mtsho* the following is taught. The Essential-Nature (*yin lugs*) of all dharmas, the truth of absolute-Meaning, is permanent, stable and eternal. In the *ālaya* there are the Gnosis (*jñāna*) and the *vijñāna*, and it is the

Gnosis; it is also the *triratna* of the *dharmatā* of absolute-Meaning (*don dam chos ñid kyi dkon mchog gsum*); it is the divine-Assembly of the non-duality of 'noëma' and 'noësis' which exists penetrating everything static and mobile (*brtan g-yo kun la khyab par bžugs pa'i dbyiṅs rig dbyer med kyi lha tshogs*);[49] it is identical with the *sugatagarbha*, the Lineage existing by Nature, and the hundred Families (*kula*) etc. mentioned in the Tantras. It has been explained in detail how it resides in the continuum of the non-duality of Ground and Result; how it exists in the three conditions (*gnas skabs*) of the *dharmakāya*;[50] [5a] and, since it is considered that it never appears (*snaṅ ba*) in the *vijñāna* despite the fact that it always resides in the Ground, how it—the Existential-Nature of Foundation (*gži'i gnas tshul*)—is the immediate-apprehension of the *dharmatā*-Body of Result through the gradual practice of the six Yogas.[51] It is stated that this is clearly expounded in the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*, the *Mahābherīsūtra*, the *Jñānālokālaṃkārasūtra*, the *Śrīmālādevīsiṃhanādasūtra*, the *Anūnatvāpūrṇatvanirdeśa*, the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra*, the *Avataṃsaka*, the *Ratnakūṭa*, and the *Suvarṇaprabhāsottamasūtra*. And this has been set forth in detail in the *Uttaratantra* and its Commentary, where the intention of the last Cycle of the Teaching is explained, as well as in the *dBu ma la bstod pa*[52] of Ārya-Nāgārjuna, etc.

The explanation given by the great masters, the realization-in-meditation of the great Yogins, and the doctrines taught by the Buddha and the Bodhisattvas of the ten directions of Space are all without error. But all that which belongs to the Relative (*saṃvṛti*)—the doctrines of the Void-of-Own-being (*raṅ stoṅ*), the Void of destruction (*chad stoṅ*) and the Void of negation (*dgag stoṅ*) which are the Partial (*prādeśika*) Void and total non-existence (*ye nas med pa*)[53]—must be rejected in all their forms by those seeking Liberation. Such is the teaching of the *Ṅes don rgya mtsho*.

3. Proof that this doctrine is wrong

It is established by his reputation that the great Omniscient Dol bu pa was an excellent and inconceivable being; and a foundation for an intentional statement having a special motive (*dgoṅs gži dgos pa khyad par can*) may indeed exist in accordance with an occasional declaration by Bhagavat which is intended for certain disciples (*vineya*) and according to which a *pudgalātman* exists [5b]. However, the system which accepts the doctrine literally appears quite comparable to the these of the heterodox (*tīrthika*).

In fact, the *tīrthika* proponents of the Word-*brahman* (*śabdabrahmavādin*) state that there is a transformation (*yoṅs su 'gyur ba*) of the *brahman* which is free from the spatial differentiations of east, west, etc., which is unproduced and indestructible, and which is the proper-nature of Word; the aggregate of entities of form etc. is just this [transformation]. The Śabdabrahmavādins thus state: "The *brahman* without beginning and end is the Word-essence and the Syllable: in it is produced the world construction, and it transforms itself into the world of

objectivity."[54] Since it is the essence of Word, it is called *śabdatattva*, meaning that it is the true essence of the Word. What is called 'supreme" (*mchog*) is the Self of the *oṁ* (*oṁ gyi bdag ñid*); in fact, *oṁ* is known as the proper-nature of all words and all things (*artha*); and it is the Veda.[55] It constitutes the means of comprehending the Veda which is present as a series of syllables and words; and it exists as the form of this [Veda]. The Śabdabrahmavādins add that this *brahman*, the supreme *ātman*, constitutes the obtaining of the supreme *dharma*-of-result, felicity (*abhyudaya*) and the summum bonum (*niḥśreyas*), and that it is not perceived by the inner-organ.[56]

Similarly, the Jo naṅ pas teach that the permanent, stable and eternal taught under the name of '*sugatagarbha*'—the Divinity of absolute-Meaning (*don dam pa'i lha*), *mantra, tantra* (*rgyud*), *maṇḍala, mudrā*, etc.—[6a], the Perfection of the supreme self—which is totally pure, has the qualities of the Forces (*bala*), etc. existing inherently since the beginning, and exists since the beginning pervading all the static and mobile world—is the Existential-Nature constituting the foundation of all that is the relative *raṅ stoṅ*.

Thus, just as the *tīrthika* proponents of the *śabdabrahman* maintain that all entities (*bhāva*) are transformations of the Word and that they possess its proper-nature, the Jo naṅ pas also consider that the permanent and stable which pervades all that is static and mobile is the Essential-Nature of all. There is therefore not the slightest difference between these two theories.

Moreover, the way in which the Jo naṅ pas teach how Liberation is obtained does not appear to differ from the *tīrthika* Sāṃkhya philosophers. The Sāṃkhya postulates 25 categories and maintains that amongst them 24 are material (*jaḍa*) while the 25th is cognition (*šes pa*) or consciousness (*rig pa*), permanent and stable, the proper-nature of the sentient-being which pervades all that is static and mobile, is unconditioned and is the self of proper-nature free from the actions of going, coming, etc. When the *puruṣa* of cognition and consciousness has a desire for the enjoyment (*bhoga*) of an object, the *pradhāna* manifests all the aggregates of transformation; the *buddhi* which is of a material nature then becomes inclined (*žen pa*: *abhiniviś-*) to this, and the *puruṣa* has the enjoyment of the object of inclination. Thus, while the solitary *puruṣa* of cognition and consciousness has never before been perceived in the condition of the cycle-of-existences (*saṃsāra*), by reason of the inclination together of the *puruṣa* and the objects of enjoyment, it finds itself turning about in *saṃsāra* [6b] and experiences Pain (*duḥkha*).[57] Thereupon one practises meditation, and when its constant habit has been achieved, the desiring inclination that the *puruṣa* has for objects diminishes more and more. Because it is observed by the divine-eye (*divyacakṣus*), the *pradhāna* no longer manifests the transformation-aggregate because of shame; and the transformations are first reabsorbed in that from which they were originally produced, and the transformation is finally tranquillized in the nature of the *pradhāna*.[58] As the *pradhāna* exists in a potential state without ever being manifested,[59] all these perceptible evolutes from it having a worldly nature clarify themselves like a rain-bow in space; and the self or

puruṣa of cognition and consciousness then exists alone. When nothing else appears any more, the Sāṃkhya holds that Liberation has been obtained.[60]

Similarly, the Jo naṅ pas also consider that the Essential-disposition of all *dharmas*, though existing permanently from the outset, is not seen because of conceptual-inclination (*abhiniveśa*). Then when one perceives through the practice of yoga that they have the proper-nature of a mirage (*marīci*), of smoke, etc.,[61] he obtains ultimate Awakening (*saṅs rgyas*); the permanent *tathatā* alone appears then, and nothing else appears. Whereas the *saṃvṛti* and the *raṅ stoṅ* are nothing but total non-existence (*ye med la soṅ ba*), when nothing but the solitary absolute-Meaning appears Awakening is obtained.

The two preceding systems are thus quite similar; and there is not the slightest difference of superiority or inferiority between them, as any intelligent person who examines them will understand.

Moreover, the Jo naṅ pas maintain that the whole of the octad [of vijñānas] consisting of the present *ālayavijñāna* etc. possesses an impure proper-nature (*tshogs brgyad 'dus pa 'di dag dri ma'i raṅ bžin can*), and in this they resemble the Mīmāṃsaka who accepts impurety as the proper-nature of the mind [7a]. The impurity penetrates into the nature of the mind; therefore, though one may try to remedy it so as to eliminate it, this is really useless. Hence, although they have a theory of liberation, it is the cycle-of-existence (*saṃsāra*) that they have really established!

Moreover, the Jo naṅ pas, inasmuch as they maintain that the things which belong to relativity are only illusory appearances (*'khrul snaṅ*), admit that the permanent absolute-Meaning is established if it differs from this [relativity]. Now this theory is comparable to that of the different *tīrthikas* who advocate the Vedānta and who affirm that this (*'di*) is just an erroneous appearance; that the permanent and omnipresent knowledge (*šes pa*) which includes no duality between subject and object finds itself when separated from this (*'di nas logs na*) in the proper-nature of Liberation; and that the many separately existing selves of the creatures are absorbed in the essence of the great Self when they obtain liberation. This is so because, except for a mere difference in terms, they both hold in reality that liberation is permanent and because their systems of liberation (*grol tshul*) and of [bondage in the] cycle-of-existences (*'khor tshul*) are similar.

The theory proposed by the Jo naṅ pas in this respect proves to incur besides the twin fault of eternalism and nihilism. For by holding that the proper-nature of the absolute-Meaning exists as a permanent proper-nature, they fall into the extreme of the eternal (*śāśvatānta*); and by accepting that the relativity which exists beforehand in the saṃsāric condition no longer exists when one is Awakened, they fall into the extreme of nihilism (*ucchedānta*).

* * *

To support their doctrine of the *gžan stoṅ* which is truth of absolute-Meaning (*paramārthasatya*), permanent, stable and eternal, and which pervades all the

static and mobile, the Jo naṅ pas also quote the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*, the Kālacakra, the *Dharmadhātustotra*, and numerous Sūtra and Śāstra texts [7b]. It is however absolutely necessary to interpret texts of indirect meaning (*neyārtha*) by means of the three Gates [i.e. criteria] of the intentional-basis (*dgoṅs gži*, that which is intended but expressed indirectly), the motive (*dgos pa*) and the incompatibility (*gnod byed*, between a literal interpretation and the real doctrine).

If it is declared (by the Teacher) that Forces (*bala*) and Intrepidities (*vaiśāradya*) exist in the sentient-being, this refers only to the ground (*gvi*) for their production through purification of the impurety of the sentient-being, who is by nature perfectly pure (*prakṛtiviśuddha*).

If it is declared that the permanent and stable *tathāgatagarbha* exists, this is an indirect meaning pronounced with reference to the *tathatā* in order to attract the *tīrthikas*; but if it were of definitive meaning (*nītārtha*), it would not differ from the heterodox *ātmavāda*. This has been clearly declared by the Buddha himself in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*:[62] 'The Bodhisattva Mahāmati addressed Bhagavat respectfully saying: Bhagavat has declared the *tathāgatagarbha*. Bhagavat has declared that the primordially-pure through Purity which is luminous by proper-nature since the outset and possessing the thirty-two Marks (*lakṣaṇa*) exists within the body (*lus* = *deha*) of sentient-beings; Bhagavat has declared that, though enveloped—like a precious stone enveloped by a rag—by the rag of the *skandhas*, *dhātus* and *āyatanas*, overwhelmed by concupiscence, hate and confusion, and soiled by the impurity of unreal dichotomizing-thought,[63] it is permanent, stable and eternal. O Bhagavat, if this is so, how does the *tathāgatagarbha* doctrine differ from the *ātmavāda* of the *tīrthikas*? [8a] O Bhagavat, the *tīrthikas* also formulate a doctrine of permanence, speaking as they do of the permanent, stable, attributeless, omnipresent, and indestructible.

'Bhagavat replied: O Mahāmati, my teaching of the *tathāgatagarbha* is not like the *ātmavāda* of the *tīrthikas*. O Mahāmati, for the meanings (*padārtha*) *śūnyatā, bhūtakoṭi, nirvāṇa, anutpāda, animitta, apraṇihita*, etc. the Tathāgatas-Arhats-Saṃyaksambuddhas have given the teaching of the *tathāgatagarbha*. So that the puerile may abandon their states of fear concerning Insubstantiality (*nairātmyasaṃtrāsapada*), the state of the absence of conceptualization, the domain of non-appearance (*nirābhāsagocara*) is taught by the teaching of the Gate of the *tathāgatagarbha*. O Mahāmati, the Bodhisattvas of the future and the present must not attach themselves in their conceptions (*abhiniviś-*) to a self. O Mahāmati, a potter for example makes from a single lump of clay pots of different shapes by using his hands, skill, a tool, water, a cord, and effort. Similarly, O Mahāmati, by the varied use of transcending discriminative knowledge and skill in means the Tathāgatas teach [8b] that reversal of all the features of conceptualization, the Insubstantiality of *dharmas*, either by the teaching of the *tathāgatagarbha* or by the teaching of Insubstantiality—and this by different turns of word and syllable in the manner of a potter.[64] O Mahāmati, the Tathāgatas thus teach the (*tathāgata*)*garbha* inasmuch as they teach the *tathāgatagarbha* in order to attract (*ākarṣaṇa*) those who are attached to the heterodox

ātmavāda. How can people whose minds (*āśaya*) fall into the conceptual theory bearing on an unreal self (*abhūtātmavikalpa*) attain quickly the complete Awakening in the supreme and exact Sambodhi, possessing a mind (*āśaya*) comprised in the domain of the three *vimokṣamukhas*? O Mahāmati, it is because of this that the Tathagatas teach the *tathāgatagarbha*. O Mahāmati, with a view to casting aside the heterodox theory you must treat the *tathāgatagarbha* as non-substantial (*anātman*).'

In this text Mahāmati is Mañjughoṣa, and in order to resolve the doubts of people of little intelligence he respectfully asked the Teacher: If the Lord's mode of teaching the *lathāgatagarbha* is of indirect meaning, what is the intentional-basis and what is the motive; if it is a teaching of definitive meaning, there will be no difference between it and the self of the *tīrthikas*. The Lord then replies: Whereas this would be true if the meaning were definitive, because the meaning is indirect the teaching is not similar to the *ātmavāda* of the *tīrthikas*.

In this connexion the intentional-basis [9a] is the Limit-of-Reality (*bhūtakoṭi*). The motive is to attract through Means those whom it would be impossible to introduce to the Teaching because of their fright were the Essential-Nature to be taught straightaway to the heterodox who are from the outset attached in their conceptions to a self; they will have faith in this mode of verbal teaching conforming with their theory of the permanent self and in the Tathāgata, and then little by little they will comprehend the reality (*tattva*). Thus the teaching is not faulty, and attainments will result.

If this Sūtra were of definitive meaning, this would involve the enormity of an unconditioned (*asaṃskṛta*) adorned with the Formal-attributes of the Marks (*lakṣaṇa*) and subsidiary Marks (*anuvyañjana*), of an ultimate *dharmadhātu* endowed with the two Purities united with the *skandhas* and *dhātus* having an Efflux (*sāsrava*), and of a Buddha overwhelmed by the three poisons [of concupiscence, hate and confusion]. For, in Nāgārjuna's teaching contained in the *Dharmadhātustotra* etc., the intentional-basis of Relativity—viz. the shining-knowledge of the Mind, Production-in-interdependence, that which is dependent[65]—and the intentional-basis of absolute-Meaning—Reality[66]—, all that belongs to *saṃsāra* and the ground of purification (*sbyaṅ gži*) from the impurities, are only discursive denominations. For otherwise there would arise a contradiction with the *Mādhyamikakārikās*.

If you object that there exists an important distinction because the *gžan stoṅ* of absolute-Meaning has been expounded in the Stotra-collection whereas the *Mādhyamikakārikās* expound merely the *raṅ stoṅ* (*svabhāva-śūnya*) and Absolute-Negation, it will be necessary to point out that the *Mādhyamikakārikās* (25. 4–6) reject the opinion that *nirvāṇa* is either an entity or a non-entity by stating:

[bhāvas tāvan na nirvāṇaṃ jarāmaraṇalakṣaṇam/
prasajyetâsti bhāvo hi na jarāmaraṇaṃ vinā//
bhūvas ca yadi nirvāṇaṃ nirvāṇaṃ saṃskṛtaṃ bhavet/
nâsaṃskṛto hi vidyate bhāvaḥ kvacana kaścana//

bhāvaś ca yadi nirvāṇam anupādāya tat katham/
nirvāṇaṃ nânupādāya kaścid bhāvo hi vidyate//]

Nirvāṇa is not an entity [9b]: (otherwise) the characteristic of ageing-death would arise, for there is no entity without the characteristic of ageing-death. If *nirvāṇa* is an entity, it will be conditioned; for nowhere does a non-conditioned entity exist. If *nirvāṇa* is an entity, how is it that *nirvāṇa* is independent? For nowhere does an independent entity exist.—What is it then? The *Mādhyamikakārikā* (25.3) explains:

[aprahīṇam asamprāptam anucchinnam aśāśvatam/
aniruddham anutpannam etan nirvāṇam ucyate//]

That which is unrejected and unobtained, undestroyed and non-eternal, unabolished and unproduced is called *nirvāṇa*. Your thesis contradicts this statement.

If you object that this refers to the *raṅ stoṅ*, your own opinion that *nirvāṇa* is the absolute-Meaning itself without a distinction between *raṅ stoṅ* and *gžan stoṅ* is untenable. Moreover, you must explain how the *Mādhyamikakārikās* 25.19–20 are to be understood:

[na saṃsārasya nirvāṇāt kiṃcid asti viśeṣaṇam/
na nirvāṇasya saṃsārāt kiṃcid asti viśeṣaṇam//
nirvāṇasya ca yā koṭiḥ koṭiḥ saṃsārasya ca/
na tayor antaraṃ kiṃ cit susūkṣmam api vidyate//]

Saṃsāra is in no way different from *nirvāṇa*, and *nirvāṇa* is in no way different from *saṃsāra*; the limit of *nirvāṇa* is the limit of *saṃsāra*, and there is no distinction between them, however subtle.

If all the sources which have constituted erroneous discourses concerning the system of the two Truths and the theories on the indirect and definitive meanings of the three Cycles were to be cited in addition, there would be a superabundance; and seeing that details about this are to be found elsewhere, we shall not expatiate on them here. It has been necessary to explain this much here because some persons who pride themselves now on being interpreters of the *dharma* are embroiled in the very work of Māra inasmuch as they teach that this Jo naṅ pa doctrine is similar not only to the Cittamātra but also [10a] to the intention of the Kālacakra and its commentary and also to the essence of the Mahāmudrā in the *mantra*-system. The ominous talk which such an affirmation comprises is like the shameless cry of a crow;[67] and the errors in this bad theory have therefore been briefly revealed. But on the ears of those beings without desires who perceive that the good and the bad, gold and aconite, are Equal, how can such talk have the effect even of the sound of a herdsman's flute?

In Tibet, the land of snows, there exist many different philosophical doctrines, and it is necessary to identify the sources belonging to the different channels and

instructions of authoritative scholars and adepts. Although some errors may exist in the manner of constructing the discursive presentation, if persons versed in the scriptural tradition and in reasoning and endowed with spiritual experience examine them with an impartial mind, the essential meaning will be in fundamental agreement, as is written in the Omniscient Paṇ chen's *Phyag chen rtsa 'grel*.[68] But because this Jo naṅ pa doctrine stems from a personal invention, it is not a source transmitted by the Indian scholars and adepts; and if a sentient-being propounds such a bad and low theory which is incurable because the intention of many Sūtras and Śāstras of definitive meaning has been incorrectly explained, all the Sūtras and Tantras proclaim that the Maturation (*vipāka*) of this is unimaginable. If the sentient-being remains on the correct Path, he will become the protector of numberless sentient-beings. But by severing the vital-artery of Liberation [10b], the cause (*rgyu*) of the *dharmakāya* of the *tathāgata* is destroyed.

Thus, because they could not tolerate this method, many excellent beings of the past who were as renowned as sun and moon composed many treatises which destroyed these pernicious views.

The Omniscient Bu ston composed the refutation called *b De gšegs sñiṅ po gsal žiṅ mdses pa'i rgyan*; and his spiritual son the Translator (*lo tsā ba*) composed the *b De gšegs sñiṅ po'i mdses rgyan gyi rgyan*.[69] The *piṭakadhara* brTson 'grus dpal composed the *bDe gšegs sñiṅ po gsal bar byed pa'i sgron me*. Yar 'brog pa Rin chen tog composed the *mÑam med dbaṅ po'i rdo rje*, the *Ye šes thog tog*, the *rDo rje'i thog chen*, and the *rDo rje'i tho ba*.[70] The Sa skya scholar and master of the six sciences dGe 'dun dpal, the *piṭakadhara* of bDe ba can Rin chen gžon nu,[71] and the *dka' bži pa* Rin chen rdo rje[72] also forcefully refuted this doctrine.

In their discourses the incomparable and great Red mda' ba[73] and our omniscient *bla ma* Tsoṅ kha pa expounded many texts and arguments refuting this bad theory. And during the time when he was residing at gNas rñiṅ before going to the presence of the Master, the eldest of the latter's spiritual sons, the omniscient rGyal tshab, also composed a treatise named *Yid kyi mun sel* which defeats the theory of those who hold the extremeposition of a permanent self having the name *buddha*. He then circulated in the schools of scholars a challenge called a Request for the opportunity to discuss at any place and time, saying that if a refutation of the thesis of this doctrine is not permitted, people will incline to the opinion that this is the truth and that all else is confusion (*moha*) [11a]; but seeing that complete proofs exist in the scriptural tradition and in reasoning, if a discussion is permitted, once the Sūtras and the Tantras and their instructions, the great masters of India and Tibet, and all the doctrines established by the Buddhists and non-Buddhists have been cited, they will be discussed in order to determine which are in accord.

Though there were at that time many followers of Dol bu pa's system like Phyogs rgyal and Ña dbon who were excellent debators, nobody had the requisite skilled-insight (*pratibhāna*) to refute his arguments on this matter.[74]

* * *

Later Zi luṅ pa Śākya mchog ldan,[75] who claimed to uphold the Sa skya teaching and who was celebrated as a great scholar, wrote in his youth the *dBu ma rnam ṅes*, the *rTsod yig tshigs bcad ma*, etc. Moved as he was without his being free in mind by the demon of passion and hate directed against the method of the theory established by the master Tsoṅ kha pa—the real meaning of Nāgārjuna and his Son (Āryadeva)—he thus composed many apparent refutations. And claiming he had accepted literally the texts of the Rigs tshogs[76] and of Candrakīrti, he explained that the theory of neither being nor non-being (*yod min med min gyi lta ba*) was the doctrine of Śrī-Candra.[77] But in his old age he composed the *Lugs gñis rnam 'byed*; and, after having affirmed that Asaṅga and his brother Vasubandhu were Great Mādhyamikas[78] and that Candrakīrti and the rest were Mādhyamika proponents of the non-existence of Own-being (*niḥsvabhāvatā*), he for example insisted that this *śūnyatā* is not to be practised at the time of realization-in-meditation because it is the *śūnyatā* of destruction (*chad stoṅ*) and absolute-negation (*prasajyapratiṣedha*).[79] [11b] He thus composed many terrible discourses.

As a result of having during his whole life studied the doctrines, at the time of his death he became aware of the bad and low theory which defeats the cause (*rgyu* = *hetu*) of the *dharmakāya* of the *tathāgata*; and this constitutes a sign of the great merits of Śākya mchog ldan. When he changed his field-of-existence (*žiṅ*), he accepted as retribution the fruit-flowing (*niṣyandaphala*) from his act of reviling the exact vision of his youth. And in his subsequent existences he had experience of many burdens in accordance with what is expressed in a verse of the *Catuḥśataka* (12.10): "He who is enveloped by confusion of thought procures for himself spiritual obstacles, and he will obtain neither the good nor a fortiori Liberation."

* * *

In the divisions of one lunation of the established-doctrine (*siddhānta*), the bright fortnight brings the clear light which is the right explanation;

And the dark fortnight comprises the thick darkness of bad theories: the Jo naṅ pa system includes both.[80]

The brilliant dawn, which is the good explanation of the Kālacakra, brings thousands of suns which are the joy of scholars;

But the darkness of the bad and incurable theory in the Jo naṅ pa system obscures the Path of Liberation.

The refutations made by scholars constitute sometimes a shower of hailstones, while sometimes offerings of flower-garlands of praise are made.

After such a one as I has subjected it to a decisive examination, it is difficult to praise or criticise [exclusively] the Jo naṅ pa system:

This system joining together the iron band of the theory of the permanent, stable and eternal and the golden band of the consecrations of the Tantras and instructions

Was obtained, it is related, from Kailāsa by Yu mo in a state of Composition of mind.

The preceding discussion of this history [12a] has been made both like a naturally shining mirror and like a needle that removes the thorns of faults and errors.

This exposition of the history of the Jo naṅ pa doctrine which is part of the Cristal Mirror of good Explanations which expounds the sources and methods of the doctrines is finished.

[Well-being to all!]

* * *

Appendix

History of the Jo naṅ pas according to the Nor pa chos 'byuṅ[81]

Jo naṅ kun spaṅs [Thugs rje brtson 'grus] came[82] to Dab šar in La stod Byaṅ.[83] He was the abbot of Ñaṅ stod rKyaṅ 'dur.[84] Having relinquished this function, he practised religion in mountain retreats and became renowned as an anchorite (*kun spaṅs*). When Jo mo nags rgyal[85] presented a secluded place (*dgon gnas*) [to him], he founded Jo mo; and since this lord (*rje*) was a pupil of the Dharmarāja 'Phags pa and the others, Jo naṅ also is a branch monastery (*dgon lag*) of Sa skya. Thereafter, Byaṅ sems rGyal ba ye šes, mKhas btsun Yon tan rgya mtsho and others came.

Dol bu šes rab rgyal mtshan came to Dol bu Ban tshaṅ in mṄa' ris,[86] and he attended on sKyi ston, mKhas btsun Yon tan rgya mtsho and others. He occupied the abbatial seat of Jo naṅ, instituted the doctrinal system of the *gžan stoṅ* and constructed the sKu 'bum chen mo, and [thus] the treasury of the Dharma was revealed; so he said he thought that, the mountain having been heaped up, the ocean flowed forth.

His pupil Jo naṅ Phyogs rgyal ba also came to Dol bu in mNa' ris; and he occupied the abbatial seats of both Jo naṅ and Ṅam riṅ.

Concerning Ṅam riṅs,[87] together with the *bdag chen* of Byaṅ, the Tva wen chen po Nam mkha' bstan pa,[88] this master founded the residence (*bla braṅ*), assembly hall, etc. of Ṅam riṅ. [149a] Thereafter there was a line of abbots at Ṅam riṅs.

Kun mkhyen Dol bu pa's pupil Kun spaṅ[s] Chos grags pa[89] was the son of the *dpon* Kun dga' rgyal mtshan, the elder brother of the great Yon btsun Grags pa dar, the *dpon chen* of Byaṅ in the *g-yas ru* [of gTsaṅ province] belonging to the *dbon rgyud* of the Sa skya bla braṅ Khaṅ sar chen mo.[90] He attended on dPaṅ lo, dPal ldan seṅ ge,[91] Bu ston, Dol bu pa, and many other scholars and adepts. He established many religious schools (*chos grva*) including bZaṅ ldan, 'Ga' roṅ,[92] Chuṅ kha ba, etc., and he accomplished much that was beneficial as the ornament of the Teaching.

Sa bzaṅ Ma ti ba came to mDog dpaṅ po [spelling?] and attended on Dol bu ba, Kun spaṅs pa, dPaṅ lo tsā ba, and others. He also was the first Upādhyāya (*mkhan po thog ma*) of bZaṅ ldan. His learning was great, and his action was farreaching.[93] He also founded the hermitage (*dgon gnas*) in the secluded place of dGa' ldan sa bzaṅ.

Sa bzaṅ 'Phags pa gžon no blo gros occupied his seat there.[94] And the Vajradhara Kun dga' bzaṅ po came together with the others and occupied this seat.[95]

Notes

1 To begin with the writer wishes to express his deep gratitude and indebtedness to his Tibetan teachers who have generously given him instruction; whatever value the following contribution may possess is largely due to the guidance and instruction of these kind kalyāṇamitras.

1a Cf. *Kathāvatthu*, p. 56 ff.; etc.

1b Some resemblances are also perhaps to be found between Jo naṅ pa doctrines and certain works attributed to Aśvaghoṣa which are not available in either Sanskrit or Tibetan. Points in common are also noticeable between them and certain schools of Chinese and Japanese Buddhism, including Ch'an/Zen and T'ien-t'ai/Tendai. These cannot be further gone into here.

Since the present paper is intended in the first place to make more accessible the chapter of the *Grubs mtha' šel gyi me loṅ* dealing with the Jo naṅ pa school, prefatory matter and annotations have had to be reduced to a minimum. There is not enough space to go into detail about their theory of *śūnyatā* or the *tathāgatagarbha* and the exegesis of the canonical texts treating it. (This topic forms the subject of a separate study the present writer is preparing.) Nor has it been possible to furnish a full analysis of all the doctrines of the Jo naṅ pa school according to their own texts, since it has hitherto been necessary to rely almost exclusively on accounts of them contained in works written by their critics; it has therefore been possible to give only an outline of their best known doctrines.

The chapter of the *Grub mtha' šel gyi me loṅ* (*ThG*) translated below is one of the most comprehensive discussions available despite its comparative brevity and should thus serve as a reliable sketch of the history and doctrines of the Jo naṅ pas. The writer hopes to publish accounts drawn from other sources in further articles.

The best known and the most recent of the original Jo naṅ pa sources is the *gsuṅ 'bum* of Tāranātha (sgrol mgon) Kun dga' sñiṅ po, who was born in 1575. (The spelling Tārānātha appears to be the invention of a few modern writers.) On Tāranātha, cf. G. Tucci, *Tibetan Painted Scrolls*, pp. 128–131, 163–164. The *gsuṅ 'bum* was printed at Phun tshogs gliṅ, the Jo naṅ pa centre mentioned below (cf. *op. cit.*, p. 163b).—A collection of a Century (?) of Jo naṅ pa texts was apparently printed at sDe dge in a single volume under the title *Jo naṅ mdsad brgya*; and more or less fragmentary manuscripts of some of their works have also been preserved (v. R. O. Meisezahl, *Die alttibetischen Handschriften im Reiss-Museum*; L. Chandra, *JA* (1961), p. 513, number 103).

In this article the following abbreviations will be used:

KD	= gSuṅ 'bum of Kloṅ rdol Rin po che (1Ha sa edition);
KhG	= *mKhas pa'i dga' ston* of gTsug lag phreṅ ba (Delhi edition);
ThG	= *Grub mtha'šel gyi me loṅ* of Thu'u bkvan Blo bzaṅ chos kyi ñi ma;
DṄ	= *Deb ther sṅon po of* 'Gos lo tsā ba gžon nu dpal;
PSJZ	= *dPag bsam ljon bzaṅ* of Sum pa mkhan po (Calcutta edition);

BNTh = *Bu ston rnam thar* (appearing shortly in the Serie Orientale Roma);
BrCh = *'Brug pa chos 'byuṅ* of Padma dkar po;
RM = *Re'u mig* in *PSJZ*, part II (Delhi edition);
TPS = *Tibetan Painted Scrolls* by G. *Tucci* (Roma, 1940).

2 The text referred to here is the **Āryaśatasāhasrikā- pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikāṣṭā-daśasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitā- bṛhaṭṭīkā*, which is known as the *Yum gsum gnod 'joms* (*che ba*) (mDo 'grel, vol. pha) and is attributed generally to the Kaśmīrī teacher Daṃṣṭrāsena.

2a The Jo naṅ pas might then be described as advocates of a kind of substantialistic theory, though they are not ontologist supporters of the reality of a composite (*saṃskṛta*) thing. Even the Yogācāras are considered in the Tibetan histories of philosophy to be 'ontologists' (*dṅos po smra ba*) because they hypostasize not only the *pariniṣpanna* but also the *paratantra* as something established in reality.—However, the entire question of ontology and substantialism in Buddhist philosophy requires further study before such terms can be meaningfully applied to a given school. One authority for example—dKon mchog 'Jigs med dbaṅ po in his *Grub mtha' rin chen phreṅ ba* (6b0 and 9a2)—went so far as to ascribe to the Sāṃmatīya/Vātsīputrīyas the doctrine of the substantial existence (*rdsas yod*: *dravyasat*) of the *pudgala*; but this view has been questioned by followers such as Guṅ thaṅ dKon mchog bsTan pa'i sgron me (*Legs bšad sñiṅ po'i mchan* 19a).

The discussion on the *gžan stoṅ* refers back to the *itaretaraśūnyatā* and the Sūtra text which gives as an example of one kind of Voidness a residence for the community (*gtsug lag khaṅ*, *kūṭāgāra* or *vihāra*) empty of elephants, cows, sheep, etc., but not empty of all monks, etc. Since the comparison made between the author of the *Yum gsum gnod 'joms* and the Jo naṅ pas concerns only the method of expounding Voidness (*stoṅ tshul*), there need be no contradiction with what is said in the *ThG* translated below concerning the Jo naṅ pa doctrines being a Tibetan invention.

The exact significance of this comparison with Daṃṣṭrāsena is in any case difficult to evaluate since the authorship of the *Yum gsum gnod 'joms* is disputed. Bu ston (*Luṅ gi sñe ma*, 3a6) states that Daṃṣṭrāsena was the author of the *'Bum gyi ṭīk*, i.e. the *gNod 'joms chuṅ ba* (mDo 'grel, volumes na and pa) on the *Śatasāhasrikā*. But, while noting the ascription of the *Yum gsum gnod 'joms* also to Daṃṣṭrāsena, the Bu ston *Ohos 'byuṅ* (156a5–6) considers this commentary to be in fact a *Paddhati* by Vasubandhu; and this last ascription is also found in Bu ston's *gSan yig* (17b2). (Exactly how Bu ston could attribute this work to Vasubandhu is not altogether clear. Could he possibly have had in mind the *slob dpon* dByig gñen or Vasubandhu to whom another work of doubtful authorship preserved in the bsTan 'gyur—the *Don gsaṅ ba*—is ascribed? But see the *dKar chag* of the Peking edition as quoted by P. Cordier, *Catalogue du fonds tibétain*, Troisième partie, p. 284.)—In any case, the ascription to Vasubandhu is cogently rejected by Tsoṅ kha pa, who ascribes it tentatively to Daṃṣṭrāsena (*gSer phreṅ*, 4b-5b, and *Legs bšad sñiṅ po*, 37b6), (This question has been touched on by E. Obermiller, *Bu ston's History of Buddhism*, II, p. 146 note, and Doctrine of Prajñāpāramitā, *AO*, 11 (1932), p. 5 note.)

3 See my Introduction to the *BNTh*, Serie Orientale Roma, p. 10–12, concerning the school of Mādhyamikas with which Bu ston is to be connected. Sum pa mkhan po (*PSJZ*, p. 175.2) states that he is a Prāsaṅgika; while the other authorities cited agree that he was in fact a Ṗrāsaṅgika, they point out that some of his teachings were formulated from the point of view of the Yogācāra-Mādhyamika-Svātantrika method.

4 *TPS*, p. 128b; however, as Tucci explains, this comparison refers to the fact that Tāranātha was especially interested in the teachings of the Siddhas connected in Tibet with the bKa' brgyud pa line.

5 This is stated to be the case especially for Mi bskyod rdo rje (1507–1554), who held

that Maitreyanātha really had in mind the *gžan stoṅ* theory; his conception of the *advayajñāna* as the Absolute is thus close to that of the Jo naṅ pas.

Karma 'Phrin las seems also to have held views on the *tathāgatagarbha* that might be compared with those of the Jo naṅ pas, and he refers to the views of Raṅ byuṅ rdo rje (?1284–1339) on this subject. (I owe this last reference to the kindness of Dr. H. V. Guenther. The dates are as indicated by H. E. Richardson, "The Karmapa Sect," *JRAS*, 1958–59.)—The link may thus have been above all with the Karma pas, as is indeed indicated by rJe btsun Chos kyi rgyal mtshan's *Klu grub dgoṅs rgyan. ThG* (bKa' brgyud pa chapter, fol. 46b) attributes such errors to an inability to distinguish properly between the *neyārtha* and *nītārtha* texts.

6 The Si tu rin po che Chos kyi ñin byed is said to have at first followed the Mūdhyamika theory but to have been later introduced to the Jo naṅ pa doctrine by a rÑiṅ ma pa and to have then adopted the *gžan stoṅ* theory (see *ThG* 51b).—A *gžan stoṅ chen mo* is said to be still accepted by rÑiṅ ma pa bla mas.

7 E. Obermiller, "The Sublime Science," *AO*, 9 (1931), 106–107. Cf. also Th. Stcherbatsky, *Buddhist Logio*, I (1932), pp. 114 and 169; *TPS*, p. 92.

8 V. *ThG* 11b, below. On connexions with śaivism, cf. *TPS*, p. 92.

8a The Dol po region in question used to be counted a part of mṄa' rīs province, and it is mentioned together with Pu hraṅ, Glo bo (or Mustang, on which see G. Tucci, *Preliminary Report on Two Scientific Expeditions to Nepal*), Gu ge, and Ya tshe as part of the sTod region. See also the *Kha skoṅ* of the Ṅor pa chos 'byuṅ, fol. 130b5. This Dol po is now part of Nepal.

The appelation Dol po pa of šes rab rgyal mtshan points to the connexion between this Jo naṅ pa master and a Dol po region of sTod mṄa' ris. And the name Dol bu must be identical with Dol po—or very nearly so—for not only is Šes rab rgyal mtshan also known as Dol bu pa, but for the place name Dol po'i Ban tshaṅ of *DṄ* (tha 11a3) the *Kha skoṅ* (fol. 148 'og ma b5, translated below) has Dol bu Ban tshaṅ (or Ban tshad?) in mṄa' ris.

The name Dol however raises a problem. It appears as a kind of surname of persons whose connexion with mṄa' ris Dol po is not determined; and, indeed, according to the *DṄ* (pa 5a5), Dol is a *gduṅ* or clan; but elsewhere it appears as a place name.—In any case, Dol pa was the 'surname' of many illustrious Tibetan masters. In the *DṄ* (ca 14a3), Dol pa dMar žur pa is the same person as Rog šes rab rgya mtsho. And in many cases a precise connexion with mṄa' ris has not been established; for example, Dol pa Zaṅ thal of the *dol gduṅ* was a native of 'Tshur phu (*DṄ* pa 5a5; on the 'Tshur family (*rigs*) in Dol gyi mda', see ña 7b5; cf. ga 34b4). However, Dol pa dBaṅ rgyal was from sTod (as distinct from sMad: *DṄ* na 5a4). (A La[s] stod pa dBaṅ rgyal is mentioned in *DṄ* tha 9b and ña 57b6; La stod was the province in which the early Jo naṅ pa master Thugs rje brtson 'grus was born, and Byaṅ is part of it. On this see the translation of the *Kha skoṅ* below, as well as p. 80 n. 19 and p. 81 n. 39). Moreover, Dol pa 'Gar ston dBaṅ phug grub belonged to the spiritual lineage of Yu mo, the early Jo naṅ pa master and teacher of the Kālacakra (*DṄ* ja 6b7 and tha Sa; cf. also ga 38b6 and tha 4b4).

The latter passages at least appear to establish a link between several bla mas bearing the 'surname' Dol pa and Yu mo (who lived in the Kailāsa region and who was the spiritual ancestor of Dol po pa) and his lineage.

It is to be noted that this area in general, and in particular the region of Kailāsa and Mānasarovar, have for countless centuries been places of pilgrimage for ascetics and yogins from India. It is then not impossible that encounters with them may have had some kind of influence on the doctrinal tendencies of the Jo naṅ pateachers.

9 On the paṇḍits Gokula and Kṛṣṇa as well as Buddhagupta, Pūrṇānanda, Pūṛnavajra, etc., v. *TPS*, pp. 137 and 164 (cf. p. 74–75).

10 V. *TPS*, pp. 189–108.

11 On the princes of Rin spuṅs and Karma bsTan skyoṅ dbaṅ po, usually referred to as *sde srid*, see *ThG* translated below and also quoted in A. Schiefner, *Tāranātha's Geschichte des Buddhismus in Indien* (St. Petersburg, 1869), pp. vi–viii (followed by G. Schulemann, *Geschiohte der Dalai Lamas* [Heidelberg, 1911], pp. 135–137); *rDsogs ldan gžon nu'i dga' ston*, fol. 90a f.; *TPS*, pp. 37a, 58–64, 256 n. 130, 651b, 607–608; H. E. Richardson, The Karma pa Sect, *JRAS*, 1958, p. 156–157.

12 V. *ThG* 4a, below. A Jo naṅ pa monastery—'Dsi ka (spelling?) dgon pa—is said to exist in the district of the same name which forms part of the rṄa pa (?) region of A mdo; G. N. Roerich (*Blue Annals*, p. 777) also speaks of Jo naṅ pas in the lṄa ba region of southern A mdo. (It might seem that the *PSJZ* [ed. L. Chandra, pt. 3, p. 146] also refers to such a connexion with the A mdo region; but Jo naṅ there is presumably an error for Jo noṅ.)

13 V. *KD* za, 22a–b.
Tāranātha's spiritual successor, the 17th in the line, was the first Khal kha rje btsun dam pa Blo bzaṅ bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan, who lived from 1635 to 1723. Cf. Lokesh Chandra, *Eminent Tibetan Polymaths of Mongolia* (New Delhi, 1961), pp. 15–17; C. R. Bawden, *The Jebtsundamba Khutukhtus of Urga* (Wiesbaden, 1961).

14 *Draṅ ṅes kyi dka' 'grel* (fol. 10a): *mṅon par rtogs pa'i yon tan gyis mi dman pa'i kun mkhyen pa*.

15 Many references to this school are naturally to be found in the various Chos 'byuṅs and Grub mtha's. See in particular the Kālacakra chapter of the *DṄ*; *KhG tsa*, 36b; and *BrCh* 127b.

16 Blo bzaṅ chos kyi ñi ma (1737–1802) was the second re-embodiment of the Thu'u bkvan bla ma of dGon luṅ in A mdo (founded in 1604) and the successor of Ṅag dbaṅ chos kyi rgya mtsho (1680–1736).

Besides the A mdo editions of his *gsuṅ 'bum*, a print of it exists in ten volumes made at the Žol par khaṅ. And a separate edition of the *ThG* was made at sDe dge, where it is also known as the *Bod ohos 'byuṅ*.

17 Despite certain ressemblances with earlier Indian masters, as noted above the author of the *ThG* (fol. 10a of the Jo naṅ pa chapter) and other Tibetan authorities reject the idea that the Jo naṅ pas continued some Indian Buddhist tradition.—The connexion between Dignāga and Bhartṛhari has surprisingly not received the attention it merits though pointed out by E. Frauwallner in 1933 (*Festschrift Winternitz* [Leipzig, 1933], p. 237). Cf. also my *Contributions à l'histoire de la philosophie linguistique indienne* (Paris, 1959), pp. 90–92, where some aspects of the question were briefly discussed.

18 It is not always easy to determine exactly to what stage of development in the history of these Brāhmaṇical doctrines the outlines contained in the Tibetan Grub mtha's correspond. The description of the Sūṃkhya given in the *ThG* appears to derive from Candrakīrti's remarks in *Madhyamakāvatāra* 6. 121; this form of Sūṃkhya was briefly discussed by R. Garbe, *Sâṃkhya-Philosophie* (Leipzig, 1917), pp. 391–392. Other sources are the *Tarkajvālā* and Jñānaśrī's commentary on the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*.—On similarities between the Sāṃkhya and Bhartṛhari, cf. E. Frauwallner, *WZKSO* 3 (1959), p. 107–108.

As regards the Vedānta, it maintains in its theory of error the *anirvacanīyakhyātivāda*. But the word *'khrul snaṅ* cannot directly correspond to this term; once in the *Daśabhūmikasūtra, 'khrul ba* corresponds to *vivarta*. On *mithyājñāna, avidyā* and the *anirvaoanīya*, see the *Śāmkarabhāṣya* on *Brahmusūtra* 1. 3. 19; 2. 1. 22 and 3, 46; 3. 2. 6; etc.; cf. S. N. Dasgupta, *History of Indian Philosophy*, II, pp. 8–12 and 185.—In Buddhist usage *'khrul snaṅ* and *ma rig pa* (*avidyā*) are not usually synonymous.

18a The following translation is based on the žol par khaṅ edition compared with the sDe dge edition of the *ThG*.

In the translation of technical terms, Sanskrit equivalents, when known or at least probable, have been included in many cases because Sanskrit as the lingua franca of Buddhist studies serves to identify many terms which would otherwise be obscured in the translation. However, it should be recalled that in some cases such equivalents are given with reservations since an absolutely regular and automatic system of equivalents does not exist; moreover, it has not always been possible to determine the Sanskrit equivalents of certain Tibetan terms because of the unavailability of a great number of relevant Sanskrit texts. As regards the English translation, in some technical passages it is regrettably only an approximation because of the lack of English (or known Sanskrit) equivalents. It is hoped that the forthcoming publication of the Tibetan text announced in India will enable the reader to achieve a more precise understanding than a translation at present allows.

19 Thugs rje brtson 'grus, 1243–1313 (*RM*); cf. *DṄ* tha 2b, 9b; *KhG* tsa 36b; *BrCh* 127b.

20 Yu mo is mentioned in *DṄ* tha 2b, Sa; ga 36a; *KhG* tsa 36b. Cf. *RM* under 1052 and 1067.

21 Somanātha was the paṇḍit responsible for the Tibetan translations of the *Vimalaprabhā, Sekoddeśaṭīkā, Sahajasiddhi*, and *Sekaprakriyā*. Cf. *DṄ* tha 2b, etc.

22 sGro ston is mentioned in *DṄ* tha 2b, 7b; *KhG* tsa 36b.

23 Dharmeśvara is mentioned in the *DṄ* and *KhG, ibid.*; he was born when his father Yu mo was in his 56th year (*DṄ* 8a).

24 Se mo che ba is mentioned in *DṄ* tha 2b and 8b–9a (Teacher of Chos sku 'od zer).

25 'Jam dbyaṅs (g)sar ma šes rab 'od zer is mentioned in *DṄ* tha 2b, 8b; cha 4b–5a; ta 2a. He was a teacher of Chos sku 'od zer *DṄ* cha 5a; tha 2b, 9a. V. *RM* under 1214.

26 The žol par khaṅ ed. reads *dus 'khor bka'* dogs *kyaṅ*; but the sDe dge ed. reads *dog kyaṅ* which appears to be preferable in view of what is said later.

27 Chos sku 'od zer, 1214–1292, is mentioned in *DṄ* tha 9a; cha 5a; ṅa 10a–b; *BrCh* 127b. He was famed as a master of the Kālacakra.

28 Byaṅ sems rGyal ba ye šes, 1257–1320, became abbot of Jo naṅ in 1313 (*DṄ* tha 10b).

29 Yon tan rgya mtsho, 1260–1327, became abbot in 1320 (*RM*); cf. *DṄ* tha 10b–11b; *KhG* tsa 36b.

30 Kun mkhyen chen po or Jo naṅ kun mkhyen Dol bu pa šes rab rgyal mtshan, 1292–1361; cf. *DṄ* 11a. See also *BrCh* 127b concerning his visit to Ri phug in order to hold a discussion with Bu ston which the latter however refused.—As already mentioned above he continued to be held in great respect, as his title *kun mkhyen pa* indicates, also by his dGe lugs pa opponents; this fact is of some significance in evaluating the doctrinal disputes which took place between the different masters and their schools.

31 sKyi ston 'Jam dbyaṅs, a disciple of Roṅ pa šes rab seṅ ge: *DṄ* tha 2b, 11a.

32 bSod nams grags pa is mentioned in *DṄ* tha 10b, and he appears to be identical with Bu ston's *āoārya* at the time of his *upasampadā* (v. *BNTḥ* 9b, and *Life of Bu ston Rin po ohe*, p. 78 n. 131.

33 *Prāṇāyāma* constitutes the third member of the Ṣaḍaṅgayoga of the Kālacakra (cf. also *Maitrāyaṇīyop.* 6.18). The signs mentioned are *dhūma* etc. indicating the realization of non-duality; cf. *Sekoddeśaṭīkā* p. 29 f. p. 35 f.; *Guhyasamāja tantra* 18.

34 On this monument called the mThoṅ grol chen mo, v. *DṄ* tha 11a; *TPS*, pp. 163–164, 189–190; A. Ferrari, *mK'yen brtse's Guide to the Holy Places of Central Tibet* (Roma, 1958), fol. 22a–b.

35 This saying is found in *DṄ* tha 11b.

36 Blo gros dpal revised the Tibetan translation of the 'Kālacakra' together with Mati

paṇ chen, according to *DŃ* 11a–b. This must refer to their translation of the *Garuḍasādhana* (*mKha' ldiṅ gi sgrub thabs*); in its colophon this work is called Dus kyi 'khor lo'i rgyud. Blo gros dpal is also known as the Jo naṅ lo tsā ba (*DŃ* cha 10b; cf. tha 11b?) and he is referred to as Matiśrī in the copy of Rin chen chos skyoṅ bzaṅ po's *Rin po che'i ca ma tog bkod pa* (composed in 1514) used by B. Laufer (*Studien zur Sprachwissenschaft der Tibeter*, SBayAW, Philos.-plilol. Kl., 1808, pp. 529 and 575) (where it is said that he retained the orthography *kalpa* for the usual Tibetan *bskal pa*).

37 Sa bzaṅ Mati paṇ chen Blo gros rgyal mtshan is mentioned in *DŃ* tha 11a–b, pha 18a7, etc. He was the author of an important commentary on the *Abhidharmasamuccaya*. He distinguished between a *vijñāna* in the *ālaya* which is relative and one that is of absolute value (*don dam pa*), corresponding respectively to the *rnam šes* and *chos can* and to the *ye šes, bde gšegs sñiṅ po* and *chos ñid*. (On the distinction established by the Jo naṅ pas between *ye šes* (*jñāna*) and *rnam šes* (*vijñāna*) in the *ālaya*, v. infra *ThG* 4b.) Tsoṅ kha pa received instruction from him.

38 Phyogs las rnam rgyal, 1306–1386; v. *DŃ* 11b–12a. mKhas grub rje (*rNam thar of Tsoṅ kha pa*, 11a) states that Tsoṅ kha pa at about the age of 19 studied under Chos rje Phyogs las rnam rgyal; however *PSJZ* (p. 214) refers to this teacher as Bo doṅ Phyogs las rnam rgyal, while *RM* mentions a Bo doṅ Phyogs las rnam rgyal who lived from 1375 to 1450. Cf. also *rDsogs ldan gžon nu'i dga' ston* 66b (*TPS*, pp. 632, 666 and note 848).

39 The monastery of Byaṅ Ṅam riṅ(s), which the *RM* states may have been founded in 1225, was restored in 1354 with the permission of Dol bu pa by Byaṅ Ta'i dben (*RM*). This is the *dpon chen* mentioned in the *rDsogs ldan gžon nu'i dga' ston* (fol. 66a) belonging to the family of the princes of Ṅam riṅ who were closely linked with the teachings of the Kālacakra (*TPS*, p. 164b); cf. *DŃ* tha 12a; A. Ferrari, *Guide*, n. 536. This family also helped Tāranātha in having the work on the rTag brtan phun tshogs gliṅ temple (infra, n. 42) executed.

40 Ña dbon Kun dga' dpal is mentioned in *DŃ* tha 11b, 13a; cha 7a, 9a; pha 6a. The *rNam thar* of Tsoṅ kha pa (11b) and the *PSJZ* (p. 214) give an account of his study of the Prajñūpāramitā with Ña dbon. Along with brTson 'grus dpal, a teacher of gYag phrug Saṅs rgyas dpal, Ña dbon is considered the chief pupil of Dol bu pa and Bu ston (*ThG* 80a5).

41 Kun dga' grol mchog, 1495–1566 (*RM*); he was the 14th in the line in which Tāranātha (born in 1575) was the 16th (*KD* za 22b).

42 On the rTag brtan phun tshogs gliṅ, v. Schiefner, *Tāranāthas Geschichte des Buddhismus*, pp. vi–vii (where this passage of the *ThG* is reproduced); *TPS*, pp. 36, 62, 164, 196–198; A. Ferrari, *Guide*, fol. 21a and n. 560.

42a V. supra, p. 77, n. 11.

43 According to the *Vaiḍūrya ser po* (Delhi ed., p. 323), this refoundation took place in the year *sa khyi* (= 1658).

44 The žol par khaṅ ed. reads *yaṅ slob*, while the sDe dge ed. has only *slob*.

45 Cf. supra, n. 12.

46 This *sGrub thabs* was revised by the Paṇ chen Blo bzaṅ dpal ldan bsTan pa'i ñi ma; it was also expanded by Blo bzaṅ nor bu šes rab, a younger Mongolian contemporary of Tāranātha's successor, the first Khal kha rje btsun dam pa rin po che, in his work called *sGrub thabs rin 'byuṅ gi lhan thabs*.

47 The *stoṅ gzugs* is for example realized in the Kālacakra system on the level of the fourth *abhiṣeka*. But the Jo naṅ pas confounded this intuition and the philosophical expression to be given to the theory of the pure *jñāna* or *citta*. The *Uttaratantra* (1. 104) indeed states that in the incarnate-being there exists the *anāsravajñāna* or Gnosis devoid of impurity; but such authentic sources may become the basis for the

unfounded interpretation of the Jo naṅ pas who, while maintaining that the *rūpakāya* of such nature is the Self of the five Jinas etc., concluded erroneously that the purified Self is the negation of all relative phenomenal elements attached to a pre-existing pure *jñāna*; for according to them this negation is not the non-propositional absolute Negation (*prasajyapratiṣedha*) of the Prāsaṅgikas but a really existent Gnosis Void of all else (*gžan stoṅ*). The Jo naṅ pas thus consider that the *stoṅ gzugs* Body adorned with the Marks and secondary Marks is an object. And it is against this combination of two techniques that their critics took exception; see in this regard Guṅ thaṅ bsTan pa'i sgron me's *Legs bšad sñiṅ po'i yig cha*, fol. 12a–b: *zag med ye šes dṅos su 'khrul pa yin žiṅ / de ñid gzugs sku rgyal ba lṅa sogs kyi bdag ñid du smra ba ni/ 'dis dag pa'i bdag žes biags pa sṅar gyi ye šes de'i steṅ du kun rdsob rnams bkag pa ni med dgag tsam ma yin par ye šes de ñid yin pa la mtshan dpes bkra ba'i stoṅ gzugs kyi sku žig 'dsin staṅs su 'dod pas/ dus 'khor gyi chos skad cuṅ žig bsres pa yin te/*

The Tibetan critics usually stress that this theory was unknown before the Jo naṅ pas, and in particular before Dol bu pa, who was the first to write it down in a manual.

48 Along with the *Ṅes don rgya mtsho* the *DṄ* (tha 11b) mentions a *bsdus don sa boaḍ*, commentaries on the *Uttaratantra* and the *Abhisamayālaṅkāra*, the *bsTan pa'i spyi 'grel*, and the *bKa bsdu bži pa* as Dol bu pa's treatises expounding the *gžan stoṅ*. See G. N. Roerich, *Blue Annals*, p. 777.

49 The rendering 'noëma' and 'noësis' for the term *dbyiṅs rig* is only an approximation. This non-dual realization of the integration of *dbyiṅs rig* constitutes a high order of intuition relating to the level of the *dharmakāya*.

50 These are the pure condition (*šin tu rnam dag gi gnas skabs*), the impure-and-pure condition (*ma dag pa daṅ dag pa'i gnas skabs*) and the impure condition (*ma dag pa'i gnas skabs*).

51 Cf. supra, n. 33.

52 This may be an error for the *Chos kyi dbyiṅs su bstod pa = Dharmadhātustotra* (?).

53 Cf. infra, 6b. And, as is explained later (fol. 7a), with this theory of the total non-existence of the relative—which is to be carefully distinguished from Absolute-Negation—the Jo naṅ pas risk falling into the extreme of destruction (*ucchedānta*).

54 This is the first *kārikā* of Bhartṛhari's *Vākyapadīya*:

> anādinidhanaṃ brahma śabdatattvaṃ yad akṣaram/
> vivartate 'rthabhāvena prakriyā jagato yataḥ//

A less adequate translation of *VP* 1. 1 is found in the Tibetan version of Jñānaśrī's Commentary on the *Laṅkāvatāra* (fol. 126b in the Peking ed.); this version has been noted by H. Nakamura, *Studies in Indology and Buddhology* (S. Yamaguchi Presentation Vol., Kyoto, 1955), p. 123 f.

55 On the significance of *oṁ* and the *akṣara* in Vedāntic philosophy in general, cf. H. Oldenberg, *Die Lehre der Upanishaden* (Göttingen, 1923), pp. 134 f., 227; P. Deussen, *Das System des Vedânta* (Leipzig, 1920), pp. 8–9, 143–145, 157, 213 f.; recently: J. A. B. van Buitenen, *JAOS*, 79 (1950), pp. 176–187.

56 The sense of this remark is not altogether clear. But *naṅ gi byed pa* may correspond to *antaḥkaraṇa*; on this cf. e.g. *VP* 1. 114; 3.7.41 and 3.6.23 (v. H. Nakamura, *loc. cit.*).

57 Cf. R. Garbe, *Sâṃkhya-Philosophie*, p. 367 f.

58 This description of the Sāṃkhya, apparently based on the *Madhyamakāvatāra* 6. 121, differs somewhat from that found in the *Sāṃkhyakārikā* and *Kaumundī* (v. 59–61) and described by Garbe, *loc. cit.*, and by E. Frauwallner, *Geschichte der Indischen Philosophie*, I (Salzburg, 1953), pp. 316–318, 378 f. (where the doctrine which is described by Frauwallner is attributed—der Einfachheit halber [p. 303]—to Pañcaśikha). Cf. supra, p. 79 n. 18.

59 This refers to the Unmanifest (*avyakta*) or *prakṛti*, a kind of natura naturans.
60 This is the *kaivalya* of the Sāṃkhya (-Yoga).
61 Cf. supra, p. 81, n. 33.
62 In a few points, which scarcely affect the meaning of the passage, the text of this passage of the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* as found in the *ThG* differs slightly from that found in the bKa' 'gyur and the Sanskrit (ed. B. Nanjio, pp. 77–79).
63 The Sanskrit text has: *rāgadveṣamohābhibhūtapari-kalpamalamalinaḥ* ... The Tibetan translation presupposes something like °*paribhūta*° instead of °*abhūta*°.
64 The *ThG* reads here *de bžin du de bžin gśegs pa rnams kyaṅ ohos la bdag med par rnam par rtog pa'i mtshan ñid thams oad rnam par log pa de ñid šes rab daṅ thabs la mkhas pa de daṅ ldan pa rnam pa sna tshogs kyis de bžin gšegs pa'i sñiṅ por bstan pa'am/ bdag med par bstan pas kyaṅ ruṅ ste/ rdsa mkhan bžin du tshig daṅ yi ge'i rnam graṅs sna tshogs kyis ston te/*—The lHa sa edition (mDo en, fol. 136b2) reads *chos la bdag med pa'i rnam par rtog pa'i mtshan ñid thams oad rnam par log pa de ñid*; Bu ston seems to have read *chos bdag med pa rnam par rtog pa'i* ... (if the lHa sa edition of the *mDses rgyan*, fol. 21b6 is to relied on). Nanjio, p. 78, reads: *tad eva dharmanairātmyaṃ sarvavikalpalakṣaṇavinivṛttam* ...
65 *Sems gsal rig* is the mind in its phenomenalizing and conditioned state. Pure 'luminous knowledge' is given as the distinguishing feature of Mind in its relative form, whereas the Void is its proper-nature (*gsal žiṅ rig pa sems kyi mtshan ñid; gsal ba sems kyi mtshan ñid / stoṅ pa sems kyi raṅ bžin/*; etc.); and, according to some, it is the unabolished principal-manifestation of Mind (*sems kyi raṅ gdaṅs ma 'gag pa gsal tsam rig tsam šel sgoṅ lta bu*; see mKhas grub rje's *lTa khrid mun sel*, 13a2, 16a1 and 23b6). The definition 'pure luminous-knowledge' applies to Mind as container (*rten*), it being established by a logical proof that no upper and lower limits are to be reached for pure knowledge when it is firm (*Kun mkhyen Blo rig* 26a5: *rten sems gsal rig tsam yin la/ de brtan par rig pa tsam gyi ya mtha' daṅ ma mtha' thug med du sgrub pa'i rigs pas grub pa'i phyir*).

Paṇ chen bSod nams grags pa states (*rGyud bla ma'i 'grel pa*, 28b) that some earlier scholars considered the *sems gsal rig* of the sentient-being to be the *tathāgatagarbha* (*sems oan gyi sems rig ciṅ gsal tsam de ... bde gšegs sñiṅ por 'chad*).
66 The žol par khaṅ ed. has *de bžin ñid* (*tathatā*), and the sDe dge ed. has *de kho na ñid* (*tattva*).
67 Just as the ominous call of a certain bird, the *than bya*, forbodes drought, and calamity, so does this ominous talk indicate the presence of danger.
68 Two works of the Paṇ chen Blo bzaṅ chos kyi rgyal mtshan.
69 Bu ston's spiritual son, the *lo tsā ba*, is sGra tshad pa Rin chen rnam rgyal.—The writer has prepared a translation of these two works which he hopes soon to publish, together with a study on the theory of the *tathāgatagarbha* and the *gotra*.
70 Yar 'brog pa refuted the Jo naṅ pa doctrines by showing that they had erroneously confused the *mantra* method of the Kālacakra with the *pāramitāyāna* and the Sūtra method. His point of view is however peculiar inasmuch as he included the Prajñāpāramitā Sūtras of definitive meaning in the third Cycle of the Teaching, while he held that the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* etc. agree with the *Saṃdhinirmooanasūtra* etc. His refutation of the Jo naṅ pa theory was therefore considered by the dGe lugs pas to be ineffective since he had as it were given up his sword to the Jo naṅ pas whom he then attempts to fight with an empty scabbard.
71 A bKa' brgyud pa Rin chen gžon nu is mentioned in *DṄ* ña 140a f., but bDe ba can is a name of a school at sÑe thaṅ. (Another bDe ba can gyi mchod khaṅ is mentioned in the *Sa skya dkar ohag*: Ferrari, n. 494.).
72 A *bka' bži pa* Rin chen rdo rje is mentioned in *DṄ* ta 11b.
73 Red mda' ba gžon nu blo gros, 1349–1412, was a Sa skya pa master and one of Tsoṅ

kha pa's principal teachers. He was a pupil of Ña dbon Kun dga' dpal; he is known as a critic of the Kālacakra, and the three *Byaṅ chub sems 'grels* attributed to Nāgārjuna as well as of the *khrid* of the Ṣaḍaṅgayoga. At first he also considered the *Uttaratantra* to be a Vijñāvavādin work, but he later changed his opinion. He is especially famous for his commentaries on the Abhidharma and the *Madhyamakāvatāra*.

74 Cf. *PSJZ*, p. 271 where it is stated that, before becoming a disciple of Tsoṅ kha pa, rGyal tshab Dar ma rin chen (1304–1432) had studied at Sa skya, gSaṅ phu, rTse thaṅ, etc. and had defeated in discussion Roṅ ston and gYag sde paṇ chen.

75 Šākya mchog ldan, 1428–1507, was a disciple of Roṅ ston šākya rgyal mtshan (1307–1440), who is stated to follow the Mādhyamika-Svātantrika doctrine.

Šākya mchog ldan is said to have at first followed the Mādhyamika, then the Vijñānavāda, and finally the Jo naṅ pa doctrine (*ThG* 85b3–4; cf. *PSJZ*, p. 257). His doctrines, like the Jo naṅ pa ones, are said to have the effect of destroying the cause of the *dharmakāya* of the *tathāgata* (see below; and above, fol. 10a); this is so because he came to reject the Prāsaṅgika theory according to which *śūnyatā* is Absolute-Negation (which is *not* to be confused with total non-existence, *ye nas med pa*).

76 These are Nāgārjuna's *Mādhyamikakārikās, Vigrahavyāvartinī, Ratnamālā, Yuktiṣaṣṭikā, Śūnyatāsaptati*, and *Vaidalyasūtra*. Bu ston in his *Chos 'byuṅ* (fol. 19b) gives a slightly different list; cf. also E. Obermiller's note 506 in his translation of *Bu ston's History of Buddhism*.

77 This general interpretation of the Mādhyamika was quite frequent amongst scholars of the Sa skya pa, rÑiṅ ma pa, Karma pa and 'Brug pa schools. It was also accepted by žaṅ Thag sag pa, a follower of sPa tshab lo tsā ba who introduced the Mādhyamika into Tibet (cf. *DṄ cha* 8a-b).

78 *dBu ma pa chen po*. The term 'Great Mādhyamika' (*dbu ma chen po*) is applied by certain Tibetan scholars, including the Jo naṅ pas and Karma Mi bskyod rdo rje (1507–1554), to the theory of the Gnosis without differentiation between apprehender and apprehended (*grāhya-grāhaka: gzuṅ 'dsin gñis med kyi ye šes*) which is held to be the ultimate reality (*gnas lugs mthar thug pa*). This *advaya-jñāna* corresponds to the Jo naṅ pa definition of the *pariniṣpanna* or Absolute. According to Mi bskyod rdo rje, this doctrine of the *dbu ma chen po* was taught in the Stotra collection attributed to Nāgārjuna and in Āryadeva's *Catuḥśataka*. The Great Mādhyamika is then distinct from the partiaī Mādhyamika (*phyogs goig pa'i dbu ma*) which teaches Absolute non-Existence (*bden par med pa tsam gyi stoṅ ñid* and the *med dgag* or Absolute-Negation). Mi bskyod rdo rje furthermore held that the Prajñāpāramitā Sūtras and the *Abhisamayālaṅkāra* are to be interpreted in accordance with the *dbu ma chen po* of the *alīkākāra* doctrine of the Nirākāravādins Asaṅga and Vasubandhu; Asaṅga, Vasubandhu, Dignāga, and Dharmakīrti are thus considered to have maintained the *dbu ma chen po* which is then assimilated to the *sems tsam rnam brdsun pa* doctrine. The doctrine of the *gžan stṅ chen mo* also belongs to the *dbu ma chen po*.

Šākya mchog ldan apparently also accepted a comparable classification of these Indian sources inasmuch as he is stated to consider the Mādhyamika of Candrakīrti which teaches Insubstantiality (*ṅo bo ñid med pa, niḥsvabhāvatā*) to be a lower doctrine which does not correspond to the highest Gnosis.

Long before Mi bskyod rdo rje, Go rams pa bSod nams seṅ ge (1420–1489), a contemporary of Šākya mchog ldan, had rejected for the Sa skya pas the idea that the teachings of Maitreyanātha and the works of Asaṅga, Vasubandhu, Dignūga, and the other masters of this line could be considered as setting forth the *dbu ma chen po* identical essentially with the 'real' opinion of Nāgārjuna and Āryadeva. Indeed, if such were the case, Go ram pa asks, what texts should we have belonging to the Cittamātra?

The background to these theories still remains to be studied on the basis of the abundant sources available both in Sanskrit and in Tibetan.

79 As already stated, according to šūkya mchog Idan the *raṅ stoṅ* or Prāsaṅgika *śūnyatā* was a Void of destruction (*chad stoṅ*), which is only applicable to the relative, all the appearances of which are totally non-existent.

80 According to a frequently mentioned idea, a movement in the discursus of the relative world at the same time presupposes and brings about a counter-movement; thus, on the discursive level a truth may engender as it were a counter-truth. This mechanism is compared to the periodic alternation of the *śukla*° and *kṛṣṇapakṣa*s, of the *vivarta*° and *saṃvartakalpa*s, etc. According to the rÑiṅ ma pas this also accounts for the existence of false *gter ma*'s and *gter ston*'s beside the authentic ones. Here the Jo naṅ pa doctrine is said to comprise within itself both phases of this periodic movement.

81 The following notice on the Jo naṅ pas, which furnishes some further valuable information not included in the *ThG*, is taken from folio 148 'og ma of the *Kha skoṅ Legs bšad nor bu'i baṅ mdsod* by Saṅs rgyas phun tshogs, a supplement to the *Dam pa'i chos kyi 'byuṅ tshul legs bšad bstan pa'i rgya mtshor 'jug pa'i gru chen* by dKon mchog lhun grub. On this work see also *TPS*, p. 145.

82 The word *'byon pa* meaning 'come, arrive" is apparently ȧpplied here and below to the 'advent' of a master in his birth-place. On Dol bu pa's 'advent' in mṄa' ris Dol bu Ban tshaṅ see just below.

83 This name appears as La stod byaṅ gi dab phyar spaṅ sgaṅ in *DṄ* tha 9a7.

84 rKyaṅ 'dur was founded by 'Jam dbyaṅs gsar ma according to *DṄ* cha 4b; cf. *id.* tha 8b4 and 9b1.

85 Jo mo nags rgyal is mentioned as (the residence of) one of the bsTan ma beu gñis who resides in gTsaṅ stod (*KD ya* 6b5). (G. N. Roerich, *Blue Annals*, II, p. 772, explains Jo mo nags rgyal as the local deity of Jo naṅ.)

86 It is not quite certain whether the xylograph has Ban tshad or Ban tshaṅ, as in *DṄ*. Cf. supra, p. 77, n. 8a.

87 On Ṅam riṅ(s) which was a famous centre for the study of the Kālacakra, etc., v. supra, p. 81, n. 39.

88 On Nam mkha' bstan pa (or brtan pa), v. *BNTh* 28b3 (which also mentions the religious name Rin chen dpal bzaṅ po) and 40aB; *rDsogs ldan gžon nu'i dga' ston*, 66a. Cf. supra, p. 81, n. 30.

89 Chos grags dpal bzaṅ po, the kun spaṅs or anchorite, is mentioned in *DṄ ña*. 57b; tha 11b, 15b, 19b, 41a; pha 18a7. (See also the *Life of Bu ston Rin po che* (*BNTh* 22b1 and 23b3)?). V. *RM* under 1313.

90 On the khaṅ gsar (and Byaṅ rin) see *DṄ* ṅa 6a-b.

This passage of the *Kha skoṅ* is not quite clear concerning these persons. Compare *rDsogs Idan gžon nu'i dga' ston* 60a2 f., which is followed by *PSJZ*, p. 160.

According to these sources, the Byaṅ bdag and dpon Grags pa dar was a contemporary of Se chen, i.e. Qubilai Qan. His grandson was Nam mkha' brtan pa (v. supra), whose son was Rin rgyan, and the latter's son was Chos grags dpal bzaṅ, a *si tu chaṅ gu* (1352–1417; cf. the Genealogical Table IV in *TPS*). It does not seem that this Chos grags dpal bzaṅ si ti chaṅ gu is Chos grags pa, the *kun spaṅs*, of the same family, whose father was Kun dga' rgyal mtshan.

91 dPal Idan seṅ ge is mentioned in *DṄ* tha 15a-b. He was a teacher of Bu ston (*BNTh* 9a7 and 12a7; cf. *DṄ* ja 11a, 15b) and a disciple of šes rab seṅ ge (*DṄ* tha 15b and pha 21a).

dPaṅ lo tsā ba Blo gros brtan pa was also a great master of the Kālacakra, etc. (*DṄ* tha 15b, etc.). (The xylograph here reads *dpaṅ lo dpal ldan seṅ ge* as if dPal Idan seṅ ge were his name; but the reference is presumably to the well known dPaṅ lo tsā ba, 1276–1342.

92 Tsoṅ kha pa studied in these two seminaries (cf. *TPS*, p. 426a).
93 On Sa bzaṅ Mati paṅ chen Blo gros rgyal mtshan, v. supra, and *DṄ* pha 18a.
94 Sa bzaṅ 'Phags pa gžon nu blo gros is mentioned in *DṄ* pha 18a5 and 18b1.
95 Ṅor pa Kun dga bzaṅ po, 1382–1444 founded Ṅor E vaṁ in 1429 (*RM*). On his connexion with Sa bzaṅ see also *DṄ* pha 18a5.

85

VAJRAYĀNA

Origin and function*

Alexis Sanderson

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The Vajrayāna (the Diamond Way), also called the Way of Mantras (Mantrayāna), is examined in its latest phase, that of the Yoginītantras in general and the Śaṃvaratantras in particular. It is shown that the tradition of those texts is modelled on that of the non-Buddhist cults seen in such yet unpublished early Śaiva Tantras as the Picumata, the Yoginīsaṃcāra of the Jayadrathayāmala, and the Siddhayogeśvarīmata. Dependence on this non-Buddhist tradition is proved by evidence that extensive passages in the Śaṃvaratantras have been redacted from those texts. The theory that this form of Buddhism and Tantric Śaivism are similar because they have drawn on a hypothetical common source is redundant. Since the Buddhism of the Yoginītantras entails forms of religious practice which a member of the Saṅgha could not adopt without breaking his vows – this is shown through a summary of the ritual of empowerment [*abhiṣeka*] prescribed in the Vajravalī of Abhayākaragupta and the Kriyāsamuccaya of Darpaṇācārya – it may in some sense be described as heretical and non-Buddhist. There were certainly communities of monks in India who were sufficiently offended by these supposedly Buddhist practices to resort to the destruction of Tantric images and the burning of Tantric texts. However, this paper also considers the ways in which Tantric Buddhism is Buddhist, how it imparts a Buddhist meaning and purpose to its rituals, and how it either used the Buddhist doctrines of the Mahāyāna to justify the supposed sinfulness of these rituals or, more commonly, adjusted them so as to avoid this sinfulness. Either way actual transgression of monastic and lay vows is marginalized.

From about the third to the ninth century C.E. the corpus of scripture recognized by the mainstream of Mahāyāna Buddhists was greatly expanded by the addition

of Tantric texts. The Tibetans, who received Indian Buddhism when this development was virtually complete, incorporated in the Tantric section of their canon translations from the Sanskrit of almost five hundred Tantric scriptures and of more than two thousand commentaries and explanatory works. The Chinese Buddhist canon too contains many Tantric works, though the last and most controversial wave of Tantric compositions, that of the Yoginītantras, with which this paper will mainly be concerned, is poorly represented.

The term 'Tantric' is used here to denote a form of religious practice which is distinguishable from the rest of Buddhism principally by its ritual character, only secondarily by soteriological doctrine, and hardly at all by specific theories of ultimate reality. The basic character of this Tantric ritual is that it entails the evocation and worship of deities [*devatā*] by means of mantras of which the visualized forms of the deities are transformations [*pariṇāma, parāvṛtti*]. Access to such mantra-ritual is not achieved by virtue of the *prātimokṣasaṃvara*. The *prātimokṣa* vows of a lay Buddhist [*upāsaka / upāsikā*], a *poṣadha* faster, a probationer nun [*śikṣamāṇā*], a novice monk or nun [*śrāmaṇera / śrāmaṇerikā*], or a fully ordained monk [*bhikṣu*] or nun [*bhikṣuṇī*] are not sufficient qualification. It is necessary to undergo in addition an elaborate ritual of empowerment [*abhiṣeka*] during which the initiand is introduced to a particular mantra-deity and its retinue.

Empowerment ritual in the Yoginītantras

These deities are first installed and worshipped in a maṇḍala made of coloured powders [*rajomaṇḍala*]. The initiands take the Tantric vows [*saṃvara*] and then spend the night sleeping in a room adjoining that in which the maṇḍala has been prepared [*śiṣyādhivāsana*]. The next morning the initiator interprets the initiands' dreams and takes ritual measures to eliminate any obstacles to success which they may reveal. He then goes into the maṇḍala room, bestows on himself the first empowerment, that of the garland [*mālābhiṣeka*], and then imagines that his own guru is bestowing the rest. The initiands are then blindfolded, led in by a female adept [*yoginī*] or male assistant [*karmavajrin*] and presented before the maṇḍala. They are made to take an oath of absolute secrecy [*koṣapāna*] and are then made by means of mantras to become possessed by the maṇḍala-deities [*āveśavidhi*] for the purpose of prognostication. After terminating the possession by dismissing the deities the guru asks each initiand the colour of the lights he saw and interprets the colour as predicting special aptitude for this or that Tantric accomplishment [*siddhi*]. Still blindfolded he is given a flower. He is to identify the flower in his hands with himself, imagine that the deity of the maṇḍala [*maṇḍaleśa*] is standing before him in the maṇḍala, mentally enter the maṇḍala, and throw the flower forward on to the deity. The guru determines the Buddha-family [*kula*] of the initiand from the direction in relation to the centre of the maṇḍala of the point on which the flower falls. The flower is then attached to the initiand's hair. This is the garland-empowerment [*mālābhiṣeka* (1)].

The blindfold is then removed and the initiand is told the inner meaning of each element of the maṇḍala [*maṇḍalatattva*] now revealed to him. He is then 'bathed' by the guru in a ritual area traced on the ground to the east of the maṇḍala. As he does this the guru visualizes the śiṣya undergoing a mystical rebirth which transforms him into the transcendental nature of the deities. This is the water-empowerment [*udakābhiṣeka* (2)]. The śiṣya is then clothed in a red or many-coloured garment, given an umbrella, and venerated by the guru. Imagining that the śiṣya is being empowered by the deities themselves as he touches his head, brow, two temples, and the back of his head, he ties a band of cloth about his head (the crown-empowerment [*mukuṭābhiṣeka* (3)]). The two characteristic implements of Vajrayānist worhip, the vajra and the bell, are now placed in his right and left hands. The śiṣya crosses them over in front of his chest, so entering the posture of embracing a consort [*āliṅganamudrā*]. The giving of the *vajra* is the *vajra*-empowerment [*vajrābhiṣeka* (4)], and the rest is the bell-empowerment [*ghaṇṭābhiṣeka* (5)]. The guru then takes the two implements, touches the śiṣya's head with them, meditates upon him as fused with the deity Vajravairocana, and gives him his Vajrayānist name. This is the empowerment of the Vajra-name [*vajranāmābhiṣeka* (6)]. The name is determined in part by the śiṣya's Buddha-family established earlier by the casting of the flower.

The vows taken on the previous day were either the common Tantric vows [*sāmānyasaṃvara*] or those of a Vajra Master [*vajrācārya*]. The difference in outcome is that a Vajra Master is empowered and required to perform rituals for the benefit of others, such as this rite of initiation, and the consecration of idols, temples, monasteries and the like. He must worship for his own benefit as well; but he is also a priest-like officiant [*ācārya*], whereas the ordinary initiate is qualified only for his personal mantra-cult. If he took the vows of a Vajra Master he now requests the empowerment of a Vajra Master [*ācāryābhiṣeka* (7)]. This has the appearance of being a repetition of the concluding rites of the phase just completed. The guru places the *vajra* in the śiṣya's right hand and the bell in his left. The śiṣya rings the bell. Then the guru makes him enter the embrace-pose as before; but this time the symbolic meaning of this act is made more explicit: the guru empowers him by mentally bestowing on him an immaterial female consort [*jñānamudrā*]. The giving of the vajra, bell and consort is not classified as a separate empowerment. It is termed instead 'the rite of bestowing the three pledges' [*trisamayadānavidhi*]. The guru now imagines that all the Tathāgatas and the goddesses [*devī*] who are their consorts assemble before him in the sky and consecrate the śiṣya in his new office by pouring water upon his head. Proclaiming that he is giving the śiṣya the empowerment of all the Buddhas [*sarvabuddhābhiṣeka*] he inundates him. He then visualizes the Tathāgata Akṣobhya on the śiṣya's head and the other Tathāgatas and their consorts merging into his body, worships him with offerings of flowers and the like, and then explains again the meaning the maṇḍala and its components [*maṇḍalaviśuddhi*]. This is the *ācāryābhiṣeka* (7) proper. It is followed by a series of concluding rites. First the guru gives the mantra(s) [*mantrasamarpaṇavidhi*]. Then he anoints the

śiṣya's eyes in a symbolic removal of the blindness of ignorance [*añjanavidhi*], and shows him a mirror. All phenomena, he explains, are like reflections and the deity Vajrasattva, who rests in the heart of all beings, is the mirror in which they appear. The śiṣya should recognize that no entity has any instrinsic reality [*svabhāva*] and should act with this knowledge for the benefit of others [*darpaṇadarśanavidhi*]. Finally the guru shoots arrows in the various directions to remove all obstacles from the new officiant's path [*śarakṣepavidhi*].

Candidates for the highest and most esoteric mantra-cults, those of the Yoginī tantras must now receive a series of further empowerments whose bizarre and apparently sinful nature has been the cause of much controversy in India and Tibet. The following account, like that of the rest of the ritual of empowerment described here, summarizes the Vajrāvalī of Abhayākaragupta, a *mahāpaṇḍita* of the great Vikramaśīla monastery around the turn of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, and the Kriyāsamuccaya of Darpaṇācārya, a work of uncertain date based on the Vajrāvalī. The rituals of Vajrayānist initiation still practised by the Newars of the Kathmandu valley in Nepal and found in handbooks which combine the text of a Sanskrit liturgy with glosses and instructions in Newari, are based on these same sources, though they have completely removed all that might be compromising in these rituals.

After the rituals described so far have been completed a Tantric ritual feast [*samayacakra*] is served. A candidate for these higher empowerments must leave the feast with the girl who will be his consort, go in to the guru, give her to him, and return to the group outside. The guru copulates with the girl. The candidate is then led in by an assisant [*karmavajrin*]. He kneels down and offers a flower. The guru them gives him his semen, which the śiṣya must place on his tongue and swallow, thinking of it as the embodiment of all the Buddhas. The female rises and gives him from her sex 'a drop of the pollen of all the Tathāgatas.' He must swallow it in the same way. This is termed the 'secret empowerment' [*guhyābhiṣeka*]. The guru then returns the girl to the disciple, or gives him another who is bound by the pledges and vows, or is at least endowed with beauty and youth. He unites with her and experiences the four blisses [*ānanda*]. This is 'the consecration of the knowledge of wisdom' [*prajñājñānābhiṣeka*].

Finally the śiṣya requests what is termed 'the fourth empowerment' [*caturthābhiṣeka*], so called because it is the fourth if all the empowerments up to that of the Vajra Master are counted as one 'vase-empowerment' [*kalaśābhiṣeka*]. It takes the form of the guru's reciting an exposition of the nature of the four blisses, consisting for the most part of quotations from the esoteric Tantras and of Apabhraṃśa and Sanskrit verses attributed to Siddhas.

The guru then joins the hands of the couple and ties them together with a garland of flowers. He calls the company to be witnesses in the presence of the maṇḍala that this woman has been bestowed on this man before the eyes of the Buddhas. He must never abandon her [*vidyāvratadānavidhi*]. The guru then gives the vajra into the disciple's right hand [*vajravratavidhi*].

The guru now gives the implements needed for the performance of the

postinitiatory period of mantra-observance [*caryāvrata*]. He gives the skull-topped staff [*khaṭvāṅga*], the rattle-drum [*ḍamaru*] and the bowl made from a human skull [*padmabhājana*]. A woman who adopts this observance must be visualized as Nairātmyā, the consort of Hevajra, as Vajravārāhī, the consort of Cakrasaṃvara, or as the goddess of the Buddha-family determined by the flower-casting. A man should be visualized correspondingly as Hevajra, Cakrasaṃvara, or the family Buddha. He then gives the *mudrās* or sect-marks of human bone. They are a chaplet [*cakrī*], earrings, a necklace, bracelets [*rucaka*], and a girdle-skirt [*mekhalā*]. A man receives a sixth *mudrā*, namely ashes with which to smear his body. This is 'the rite of bestowing the observance' [*caryāvratadānavidhi*].

This empowerment is confined, it seems, to ritual time. The implements are immediately returned. However 'the vow of the observance of Heroes' [*vīracaryāvrata*] can be adopted. In this case the śiṣya is empowered for a period of paripatetic observance during which he will carry these implements and wear these sect-marks. Here the divine identities of the practitioners are no longer optional: a man must be identified with Śaṃvara and a woman with his consort Vajravārāhī. The śiṣya is given the sectmarks as before, a garland of skulls [*muṇḍamālā*], a tiger-skin as lower garment, a skull-bowl, a skull-staff [*khaṭvāṅga*], a rattle-drum, a brahmanical caste-thread made of sinews or the hair (of human corpses [*keśayajñopavīta*]), ashes, a head-dress made out of the hair of a thief twisted into two coils [*kacaḍorī*], a garland, a vajra, armlets, anklets, and little bells. This observance is also called the 'the Diamond (i.e. Vajrayānist) Kāpālika observance' [*vajrakāpālikacaryāvrata*].[1]

The guru then adopts the Buddha's prediction posture and predicts the initiate's liberation [*vyākaraṇavidhi*], gives him formal permission and encouragement to practise his office [*anujñāvidhi, āśvāsadānavidhi*], dictates the various rules of discipline which will bind him [*samayaśrāvaṇavidhi*], requests and receives a sacrificial fee [*dakṣiṇā*], and finally explains to him the inner meaning of all the consecrations [*abhiṣeka*] he has received [*sekaśuddhi*].

In taking up the implements and adornments of the postinitiatory observance the initiate takes on the basic character of the deities of the Yoginītantras. Śaṃvara, for example, is visualized as follows:[3]

> "In the Śaṃvara-maṇḍala there is a circular enclosure of vajras. In its centre is the cosmic mountain Sumeru. On that is a double lotus seat. On that is a pair of crossed vajras supporting a temple. In the centre of that temple the Lord [Śaṃvara] stands in the pose of the archer, with his left leg bent at the knee and his right leg straight. He treads Bhairava beneath one foot and Kālarātri beneath the other. Both lie on a sun-disc which rests the top of the pericarp of a double lotus throne. He is black and has four faces looking in the [four directions]. Beginning from that which looks towards the front [*pūrva*], [and proceeding to those which face to his right, behind him, and to his left] they are black,

> green, red and yellow. In each he has three eyes. He wears a tiger skin and has twelve arms. With two of these holding a vajra and a bell he embraces [his consort] Vajravārāhī. With two he holds up over his back a white elephant hide dripping with blood. In his other right hands he holds a rattle-drum [*ḍamaru*], a hatchet, a chopper-knife and a trident, and in the remaining left hands a skull-staff [*khaṭvāṅga*] adorned with vajras, a skull-bowl filled with blood, a vajra-noose, and the head of Brahmā. Hanging about his neck he has a string of fifty freshly severed human heads. He has all six sect-marks [*mudrā*], a caste-thread made of human sinew,[4] a series of five skulls above his forehead, and a left-facing new moon and a pair of crossed vajras upon a black head-dress of matted locks,. His faces are wrathful and sharp fangs protude at the corners of his mouths. He combines all nine dramatic sentiments.
>
> His consort Vajravārāhī is red, three eyed and single faced. Her long hair is unbound and she is naked. Her hips are adorned with [a skirt made of] fragments of human skulls and she quenches the thirst of her Lord with a stream of blood pouring from the skull-bowl held to his lips by the hand that embraces him. With her other hand reaching up holding a vajra and with its index finger outstretched in the gesture of intimidation she threatens the evil. She wears a garland of blood-drained and shrivelled human heads and the five or the six sect-marks. Menstruating, she laughs, with all the hairs on her body standing erect."

Tantric initiation was not open only to those who had taken monastic vows. It could also be received by married laypersons [*gṛhastha*]; and there is some evidence that the traditional superiority of monks over laymen was undermined. This appears from the fact that there are authorities, such as the Vimalaprabhā commentary on the Kālacakratantra, which condemn the practice of monks venerating married Vajra Masters [*gṛhasthācārya*] as their gurus if any ordained Vajra Master is available, and of married Vajra Masters being engaged as officiants for such rituals as the consecration of monasteries. The text insists that it is the duty of the king to ensure that this hierarchical distinction between the white-robed and the red-robed Vajra Masters is preserved, and compares the situation in India, where this distinction was obviously precarious, with that in China [*mañjuśrīviṣaya*]. There, he says, the Emperor sees to it that any novice or monk who is guilty of a grave transgression [*pārājika*] is stripped of his monastic robe, dressed in white, and expelled from the monastery; and this applies even to a Vajra Master in a Tantric monastery [*mantrivihāra*].[5]

Śaiva origins

Let us now consider the senses in which this tradition of the Yoginītantras is and is not Buddhist. The present author's view is that almost everything concrete in the system is non-Buddhist in origin even though the whole is entirely Buddhist

in its function. The non-Buddhist origin claimed is a specific area of the Hindu Tantric tradition. This view opposes a school of thought which, while recognizing that Tantric Buddhism, especially the systems of the Yoginītantras, has drawn on a non-Buddhist source, prefers to locate this source at a level deeper than either the Hindu Tantric systems or the Buddhist. This source has been referred to as the 'Indian religious substratum'.[6] It is held that similarities between Tantric Buddhism and Tantric Śaivism are to be explained as far as possible as the result of independent derivation from a common source, rather than as a direct dependence of the Buddhist materials on the Śaivite. Stephan Beyer has given us a good, unambiguous example of this kind of thinking when he writes the following about the deities of the Yoginītantras:[7]

> Although there are iconographic variations among these general high patron deities, they share instantly recognizable similarities: they are all derived from the same cultic stock that produced the Śiva figure . . .

The problem with this concept of a 'religious substratum' or 'common cultic stock' is that they are by their very nature entities inferred but never perceived. Whatever we perceive is always Śaiva or Buddhist, or Vaiṣṇava, or something else specific. Derivation from this hidden source cannot therefore be the preferred explanation for similarities between these specific traditions unless those similarities cannot be explained in any other way.

This is not to say that all the cults of the Yoginītantras are identifiable with specific Śaivite cults once they have been stripped of whatever Buddhist doctrinal and soteriological content they may have and are taken simply as rituals based on certain sets of deities, mantras, maṇḍalas and the rest. The evidence indicates rather that those who put the Yoginītantras together drew on Śaiva textual materials from a specific area of the Śaiva canon to assemble wholes which were identical with no particular Śaiva system except in this or that constituent, but resembled all the Śaiva systems of this area of the canon in their general character, structure and method.

This conclusion derives from a reading of the early Śaiva Tantric literature, mostly unpublished, that was authoritative at the time of the emergence of the Yoginītantras That the redactors of these Tantras depended on the Śaiva scriptures was obvious enough to those Śaivas who knew the literature. This is evident from a Kashmirian version of a well known Śaiva myth included by Jayadratha in the thirteenth century in his Haracaritacintāmaṇi. The Hindu gods are being oppressed by the demons Vidyunmālin, Tāraka and Kamala. They can do nothing to destroy them, since devotion to the Śaiva liṅga cult has made them invincible. However, Bṛhaspati, the teacher of the gods, comes up with the following ruse:[8]

> "I shall propagate the following system and call it Bauddha (/ Buddhist) – truthfully enough, since it will be no more than the invention of my

> intellect [*buddhi*].[9] In it the famous Buddha will be represented as master over the [Hindu] gods. In his visualizations even our great Cause-Deities, Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Rudra, Iśvara, Sadāśiva and Bhairava, will be portrayed as his parasol-bearers, and the Buddhist idols will be shown standing on the heads of Gaṇapati and other high Śaiva deities. When the demons get to know of these falsely conceived icons, they will undoubtedly fall into the delusion of believing that these deities really are superior to Śiva. Once I have established these icons and seen to it that they are widely recognized, I shall add certain mantras culled from the Śaiva Tantras; and lifting various passages out of these scriptures of Śiva I shall fabricate and propagate a system of [Buddhist] Tantric ritual. I shall also write passages of a more learned kind dealing with the question of bondage and liberation, displaying a level of intelligence that will prove extremely seductive. My definition of the state of bondage will include references to the worship of the liṅga, and my liberation will be a 'voidness' calculated to undermine their faith in their Śaiva rituals. Indeed I shall attack the practice of sacrifice and all [Hindu] rituals; and I shall deny the existence of the Supreme Lord by arguing that there is no Self. By putting this system together and insinuating it into their hearts I shall succeed in destroying their devotion to Śiva."

By converting the demons to Buddhism behind the back of their Śaiva guru Śukra Bṛhaspati removes the sole obstacle in the way of their destruction, enabling Śiva to accomplish the Kashmirian version of his famous exploit as Destroyer of the Three Cities (Tripurāntaka).

The form of Tantric Buddhism to which this sectarian myth refers is evidently that which includes the Yoginītantra traditions. That to attack Buddhism before a Kashmirian audience in the thirteenth century was to attack a system that culminated in these Tantras is confirmed by another piece of Śaivite propagandist mythology in the same work.[10] Once again three demons have defeated all the gods. They have destroyed heaven itself and brought about the end of orthodox religion. Śiva restores the Hindu order through Garuḍa, the winged vehicle of Viṣṇu. Empowered for his great task by Śiva's touch he flies to the golden mountain Meru, on which the demons have enthroned themselves. Turning himself into a she-ass he wraps his tail three times round the mountain's summit and hurls them down into the world of the dead [*pretaloka*]. The three demons are the two Vajraḍākas, namely Hevajra and Śaṃvara, and the Ādibuddha. Their leader is Hevajra, eight-faced, four-legged, sixteen armed and embraced by his consort Nairātmyā. He is surrounded by Mahāyānists, Vajrayānists, Śrāvakayānists and copulating Buddhas, all intent on the subversion of Hindu society.[11] Thus, when Jayadratha represents the Buddhist scriptures as built up out of elements of Śaiva mantra-ritual, the works he has in mind are above all the Yoginītantras, which authorize the cults of these demonized gods.

The mythological account of the relation between the two groups of Tantras is no doubt highly biased. But it rests on facts. The Yoginītantras have indeed drawn on the Śaiva Tantras. Specifically, there are extensive parallels between these texts and the group of Tantras classified as the Vidyāpīṭha of the Bhairava section of the Śaiva canon. These Tantras are related to the rest of the Śaiva Tantric tradition in much the same way that the Yoginītantras are related to the other classes of Buddhist Tantras. They see themselves as the most esoteric revelations of the canon; and like the Yoginītantras they stand apart by reason of their Kāpālika character.

The principal texts to have survived are the Siddhayogeśvarīmata, the Tantrasadbhāva, the Jayadrathayāmala and the Brahmayāmala. The first is the earliest scriptural basis of the system known as the Trika, which is expounded by Abhinavagupta (fl. c. C.E. 975–1025) in his Tantrāloka and is the core of 'Kashmir Śaivism'. The second too belongs to this system. The third, also known as the Tantrarājabhaṭṭāraka, is in the tradition of that other great component of esoteric Kashmirian Śaivism, the system of Kālī worship known as the Krama. The fourth, also known as the Picumata, is the basic Tantra of the cult of Kapālīśabhairava and his consort Caṇḍā Kāpālinī, a system known to Abhinavagupta, who frequently quotes the work on matters applicable to all the systems of the Vidyāpīṭha. These three works were the main pillars of the esoteric Śaiva tradition.

A comparison of the two groups of texts shows a general similarity in ritual procedures, style of observance, deities, mantras, maṇḍalas, ritual dress, Kāpālika accoutrements, specialized terminology, secret gestures, and secret jargons. There is even direct borrowing of passages from the Śaiva texts. Chapters 15 to 17 of the Buddhist Laghusaṃvara (Herukābhidhāna),[12] which teach a secret jargon of monosyllables [*ekākṣaracchoma*] (15), and the characteristics by means of which the Buddhist adept may recognize females as belonging to one or the other of seven Yoginī-families (16) and seven Ḍākinī-families (17), equal the *samayācāracestā vidhāna* chapter of the Yoginīsaṃcāra section of the Jayadrathayāmala.[13] Chapter 19 of the Laghusamvara, on the characteristics of the Yoginīs known as Lāmās, equals chapter 29 of the Siddhayogeśvarīmata.[14] Chapter 43 of the Buddhist Abhidhānottara,[15] on the rules [*samaya*] that bind initiates, equals chapter 85 of the Picumata.[16] And the fifteenth chapter of the Buddhist Samvarodaya,[17] on the classification of skull-bowls, is closely related to the fourth chapter of that work.[18]

Dependence on the Śaiva literature is also apparent in passages in the Tantras of Śaṃvara (the Laghusaṃvara, the Abhidhānottara, the Samvarodaya, the Vajraḍāka and the Ḍākārṇava) that teach the sequences of *pīṭhas* or holy places that figure prominently in the ritual and yoga of this system. The system of *pīṭhas* from Pullī ramalaya (Pū-rṇagiri) to Arbuda given in the Śaṃvarodaya[19] and elsewhere is found in the Trika's Tantrasadbhāva.[20] The direction of transmission is evident from the fact that there is an anomaly in the Buddhist list which can best be explained as the result of a distortion of the Śaiva model. This

anomaly is the occurrence of Gṛhadevatā after Pretapurī and before Saurāṣṭra in the series of the Saṃvarodaya. This Gṛhadevatā is the only place name that does not occur in the Tantrasadbhāva's list; and it is the only name that is puzzling. It is puzzling because the meaning of the word is 'household deity', hardly a likely name for a place. Now, in the version in the Tantrasadbhāva we are told not only the names of the *pīṭhas* but also classes of deities associated with each. The class associated with Saurāstra is that of the *Grhadevatās*, the household deities. Evidently, while intending to extract only the place names from a list pairing names and deities, the redactor's mind has drifted without his being aware of it from the name-list to that of the deity-list and back again.

There is no need, then, to postulate the existence of a common substratum or cultic stock to explain the similarities between the two systems. Examination of the texts reveals these similarities to be detailed and pervasive. It also enables us to explain them as direct borrowings by redactors producing what was obviously intended to be a Buddhist system parallel to the Śaiva Kāpālika cults but, of course, superior to them. Even the some of the titles of the Buddhist Yoginītantras are borrowed. Within the division of the Śaiva Vidyāpītha that contains the Śaktitantras there are besides the Siddhayogeśvarīmata, the following works listed: Sarvavīrasamāyoga, Śrīcakra, Viśvādya, Yoginījālaśaṃvara and Vidyābheda. Among the Yoginītantras there are the Sarvabuddhasamāyoga-Dākinījālasaṃvara,[21] the Hevajraḍākinījālasaṃvara (the full title of the Hevajratantra) and the Dākinījālasamvara (as the Abhidhānottara also calls itself).[22] The expression Dākinījālaśamvara/-saṃvara occurs frequently in the Śamvara texts as a description of their subject matter; and it is part of Śaṃvara's heartmantra: *om śrīvajra he he ru ru kam hūm phat dākinījālasaṃvaraṃ svāhā*.[23] Iṇ the Dākārnavamahāyoginītantra the term *sarvavīrasamāyoga*, 'the fusion of all the Heroes' qualifies ultimate reality[24] and in the Samvarodaya we have the expression *sarvavīrasamāyogadākinījālasatsukham*,[25] where *satsukham*, 'excellent bliss', is evidently an etymological substitute for *śamvara* [Tib. *bdem-mchog*].

The redactors' belief in the superiority of their systems over those on which they drew is eloquently expressed in the iconography of their deities. Śamvara tramples Bhairava and Kālarātri (/ Kālī), the principal deities of the Tantras of the Vidyāpītha. In some visualizations he wears the flayed skin of Mahābhairava as his lower garment.[26] This subjection has an esoteric meaning, of course. We are told in the Abhidhānottara that Bhairava is *vikalpa*, 'objectification' and *trsnā*, 'craving';[27] and these are to be overcome by the knowledge of Emptiness, or the Great Bliss filled with Emptiness and Compassion, or the Dharmadhātu, which are the essence of the enthroned deity (*śūnyatājñāna*[28]; *mahāsukha* + *śūnyatā* and *karunā*[29]; *dharmadhātu*[30]). But this metaphysical meaning does not exclude the other. This appears from visualizations in the same text in which the deity is said to wear the flayed skins of Brahmā and Viṣṇu, to carry the head of Śiva in his hand, and also to stand upon the non-Buddhists [*tīrthika*] and their religious systems [*darśana*], wearing the flayed skins of Brahmā and Viṣṇu and carrying the severed head of Siva in his hand[31]. The Buddhist redactors were

simply adapting yet another feature of the Śaiva Tantric tradition. For the esoteric Śaivas' Bhairavas and Kālīs are enthroned upon the corpse of Sadāśiva, the icon of Śiva worshipped in the more exoteric Śaiva Siddhānta, and Bhairava enthroned on Sadāśiva became himself the corpse-throne of certain forms of Kālī in the tradition of the Jayadrathayāmala. Here too there is no shortage of metaphysical explanation of this iconography of subjection; but our authors are also alive to the sectarian meaning. In due course of Śaiva tradition of Kashmir responded to the Buddhist Tantric iconography by creating Kālī Sugatasamhārinī, 'the destroyer of the Buddhas'. She embraces a ferocious Bhairava who wears a garland made from the severed heads of Heruka and the Buddhist Krodharājas. Hanging from his ears as ornaments are the bodies of the Buddhas, while Tārā and other Buddhist goddesses provide the hair twisted together to form his sacred thread.[32] There is also Trailokyadāmarā Kālī, who tramples the severed head of Mahākāla beneath one foot and the skeleton of Heruka beneath the other.[33]

Buddhist function

When we consider Tantric Buddhism in terms of its origin we see Śaiva influences at every turn; and the higher one goes up the hierarchy of the Buddhist Tantras, the more pervasive these influences become. However, Tantric Buddhism is, of course, entirely Buddhist in terms of its function and self-perception; and in transforming Śaiva elements it gave them meanings which obscure these origins. You will recall that the ritual of initiation includes two explanations of the meaning of the elements of the maṇḍala, and an explanation of the significance of the various consecrations. The process of worship itself is structured by purely Buddhist meditations. For example, one carries out the second evocation of Śaṃvara as follows. After reciting the Mahāyānist formulae: confessing sins, delighting in the merit of others, transferring one's own merit for the benefit of others, and taking the vow of the bodhisattva, one contemplates the four *brahmavihāras*: benevolence, compassion, joy and patience. One then meditates on the essential purity of all phenomena and oneself, sees oneself and all things as nothing but mind [*cittamātra*], realizes their emptiness, and then out of this emptiness generates the deity's icon. Later one meditates on the mandala as being resorbed stage by stage into the syllable *hūṃ*, the syllable gradually disappearing into a single point, and this point into a formless resonance which one is to contemplate as the mind devoid of objectification, the Great Bliss.[34]

The Śaiva rituals also contain meditations which see the pantheon as emerging out of consciousness and returning into seed-syllables which gradually dissolve into pure awareness.[35] But here we see that the basic pattern of emanation and resorption has been given a thoroughly Buddhist interpretation.

There remains the problem of the sinfulness of esoteric Buddhist ritual. By adapting the sexual rites of the Śaivas and their ritual consumption of the five jewels and other impure substances they were establishing a kind of Buddhism

that would have to be seen as transcending the scope of the Prātimokṣa disciplines. That a Buddhism which sanctioned such heterodox practices should have been accepted in the high seats of monastic learning in India was offensive enough to some communities of monks to prompt them to destroy Tantric images and burn Tantric texts.[36] The tradition of Abhayākaragupta and Darpaṇācārya remained true to the early tradition, insisting that any Buddhist, layperson or monk, may take the Tantric vows and receive all the consecrations, including the problematic consecrations involving sexual intercourse, provided he has achieved insight into the doctrine of emptiness. The problem of the infringement of the exoteric Buddhist vows is transcended then by means of the Mahāyānist doctrine of a higher and a lower truth.[37] The general trend, however, has been to modify the rituals so that they longer involve these infringements. The great Tantric Master Atīśa considered that the sexual elements of Vajrayānist ritual were permissible only for married householders. Monks could receive all the consecrations, including the most esoteric, but would receive the latter only in a symbolic or mental form Among the Newar Buddhists of Nepal an even more thorough expurgation has been achieved. Though their ritual handbooks are based on the works of Abhayākaragupta and Darpaṇācārya and though all those who receive the initiation of the Yoginītantras are married men and women, all explicit sexuality has been removed from the ritual, leaving only alcohol, meat, possession, and the Kāpālika accoutrements.[38]

Notes

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1 The term Yoginītantra [Tib. *rnal ḥbyor maḥi rgyud*] refers here to the class of Sanskrit works whose Tibetan translations are Nos. 360–441 in the Tohoku catalogue. The principal components of these are the Tantra groups of the following deities: Kālacakra, Śaṃvara (and Vajravārāhī), Hevajra (and Nairātmyā), Buddhakapāla, Mahāmāyāhava, Yogāmbara, Candamahārosana and Vajrāmṛta, among which the first three were by far the most influential. These same Yoginītantras were also known as the Yogānuttara-/Yoganiruttaratantras [Tib. *rnal hbyor bla med kyi rgyud*], 'the Tantras of the Ultimate [Division] of the Yoga [Class]'. The term Yoginītantra is opposed to Yogatantra. Within the latter the texts distinguish between the Yogatantras proper (Tohoku 479–493) and the Yogottaratantras 'the Tantras of the Higher [Division] of the Yoga [Class] (Tohoku 442–478). The Yogatantras proper, of which the foremost is the Tattvasaṃgrahasūtra, together with the Mahāvairocanābhisaṃbodhisūtra, the principal Tantra of the small Caryātantra class (Tohoku 494–501) placed below the Yogatantras, formed the basis of the esoteric Tantric Buddhism that was propagated in China during the eighth century C.E. by the Indian missionary translators Śubhakarasiṃha (Zemmui), Vajrabodhi (Bodaikongō) and Amoghavajra (Fukū), and was brought to Japan at the beginning of the ninth by Kūkai (Kōbō Daishi), where it survives as the Buddhism of the Shingon sect. The Yogottaratantras, principally the Guhyasamāja, have more in common with the Yoginītantras than with the Yogatantras. Both teach rites involving sexual intercourse and the consumption of alcohol and other impure substances; and in both the deities are worshipped embracing consorts. Sexual practice appears in the Yogatantras too; but it is marginal there.

The common character of the Yogottaratantras and the Yogānuttara-/Yoginītantras is recognized in a classification which groups them together as the Anuttaratantras [Tib. *hla med kyi rgyud*], 'the Ultimate Tantras'. In Tibetan Buddhism the Yogottaratantras and the Yogānuttara-/ Yoginītantras jointly occupy the position of the most esoteric level of the Buddha's revelation. In the Indian subcontinent, where Tantric Buddhism survives among the Newars of the Kathmandu valley, the Yogottara tradition has died away leaving that of the Yoginītantras in command; and among these that of the worship of Śaṃvara and his consort Vajravārāhī is overwhelmingly dominant. Two major Yogottaratantras, the Guhyasamāja and the Advayasamatāvijaya, reached the Sino-Japanese Buddhist canon in translations (Taishō 885 and 887) by the Indian Sego (Skt. Dānapāla ?), who was working as a translator in China from 982 to 1017 C.E. Also Yogottara is a ritual of Vajrabhairava translated around 1000 C.E. (Taishō 1242; cf. Tōhoku 468). Of the Yoginītantras, the last and most unconventional wave of the Tantras, only the Hevajra [Ḍākinījālaśaṃvara] entered that canon (Taishō 892). It was translated by Hōgo (Skt. Dharmapāla ?), who was in China from 1004 C.E. until his death in 1058. The most striking difference between the Yogottara and Yogānuttara-/Yoginītantra traditions is that the latter bring to the centre the symbolism, practices and deities of the Saiva culture of the cremation grounds. Beneath the Yogatantras and the Caryātantras are the Kriyātantras (Tohoku 502–827). These texts, which form the lowest category, are entirely concerned with the attainment of supernatural benefits; and the majority of the works so classified are undoubtedly the earliest specimens of Buddhist Tantrism. Texts of this class were translated into Chinese from the third century C.E. However, they were never supplanted by later developments in the way that the Yoga- and Yogottaratantras were by the Yoginītantras. They continued to be used in important apotropaic rituals in Newar, Tibetan and Japanese Buddhism. Nor did the later scholars who translated the soteriological Tantras consider them beneath their dignity. Amoghavajra, for example, produced new translations of the Anantamukhasā-dhakadhāraṇī (Taishō 1009 [Tohoku 525]), the Mahāmeghasūtra (Taishō 989, 990 [Tohoku 658]), and the Mahāmāyūrīvidyārājñī (Taishō 982, 983 [Tohoku 559]). Chinese translations of the first go back to the third century (Taishō 1011), of the second and third to the fourth century (Taishō 388 and 988).

2 Abhayākaragupta, Vajrāvalī (ed. Lokesh Chandra, Satapiṭaka Series Vol., Delhi: Sharada Rani, 1977 [photographic reproduction of a Ms]) 219[5–6]: *vīracaryāvratam eva yauvarājyavratacaryeti vajrakāpālikacaryāvratam iti coktaṃ śrīsaṃpuṭatantre /*.

3 Translating Abhayākaragupta, Niṣpannayogāvalī (ed. Benoytosh Bhattacharyya, Gaekwad's Oriental Series No. 109, Baroda: Oriental Institute, 1949), 26[1–13].

4 Following MS B *naharuyajñopavītī* against the editor's *nāgayajñopavītī*. See Vajrāvalī 219[2–3]: *nr(nū) naharumayaṃ keśakṛtaṃ vā brahmasūtram /*, "The sacred thread should be made from human sinews or hair." For the form *naharu* cf. Pali *nahāru* (< Old Indic **snāru*), Nepali *nahar*, Maithilī *nahru*.

5 Vimalaprabhā (Nepal-German Manuscript Preservation Project, Running No. E13746, Reel No. E618/5, Place of Deposit: Asha Kaji Bajracharya, Lalitpur) folio 175r1–5: *tathādibuddhe – yo gṛhī maṭhikābhoktā sevako lāṅgalī vaṇik / saddharmavikrayī mūkho na sa vajradharo bhuvi // ityādinā trividho gurur ācāryaparīkṣāyām uktaḥ // daśatattvaparijñānāt trayāṇāṃ bhikṣur uttamaḥ / madhyamaḥ śrāvanerākhyo gṛhasthas tv adhamas tayor iti / tathā — na kartavyo gurur ājñābhūmilābhaṃ vinā gṛhī / tatra śrutaparijñānair liṅgī kartavya eva yaḥ / bhūmilābhaṃ vinācāryo gṛhasthaḥ pūjyate yadā / tadā buddhaś ca dharmaś ca saṃgho gacchaty agauravam / atha — vihārādeḥ pratiṣṭhādyaṃ kartavyaṃ liṅginā sadā / satsu triṣv ekadeśe ca na gṛhiṇā ṣvetavāsinā iti / evam anekaprakāreṇācāryaparīkṣāyāṃ bhagavatokto guruḥ śiṣyenārādhanīya iti /*; ibid. folio 175v7–176r9: *iha triṣkālaṃ bhikṣubhiḥ kaṣāyadhāribhir vajrācāryo vandyate na gṛhī na navakaḥ saddharmavyākhyānena vinā / sad-*

dharmādīn puraskṛtya gṛhī vā navako 'pi vā / vandyo vratadharair buddhyā lokāvadhyānahānaye / tathā — āsanadānasamutthānam arthakriyādigauravam / sarvam etad vratī kuryāt tyaktvāsatkarmavandanam iti / iha yadi gṛhīnavako 'pi vā bhikṣuvajrācāryeṇa tulyo bhavati tadā kim asatkarma pādaprakṣālanādikam pañcāṅgavandanāṃ tyaktvā svasthāne guror āgatasyārthādigauravaṃ kartavyaṃ vyākhyānakāle saddharmādīn puraskṛtya vandanā kartavyā lokāvadhyānahānaye / iha lokāvadhyānaṃ yat gṛhasthacellakānāṃ tatkausīdyatvenottaraliṅgāgrahaṇāt prātimokṣāśrutaparijñānena yadi kausī dyābhimāno nāsti tadā kimarthaṃ prāg bhikṣusaṃvaraṃ jñātvā paścān mahāyānaṃ jñātavyam iti hevajrādike bhagavato vākyaṃ na kurvanti / tasmād — gṛhasthācāryo bhikṣubhir nārādhanīyo bhikṣau vajradhare sati / rājñā punaḥ sarvaprakāreṇa nārādhanīya iti / tathācāryaparīkṣāyāṃ bhikṣayā raktavastreṇa lajjā yasya durātmanaḥ / vandyaḥ pūjyaḥ saraṅgānāṃ bauddhānāṃ naṣ-ṭamārgiṇām iti saṃbandhaḥ / raktāmbaraṃ yadā dṛṣṭvā dveṣaṃ gacchanti pāpinaḥ / mlecchadharmaratā bauddhās tathā śvetāmbarapriyā" iti / iha bauddhadarśanaṃ sarvadā na śuklapaṭam / tathā mañjuśrīviṣaye vihāre yadā bhikṣuś cellako vā pārājikam āpadyate tadā śuklavastraṃ dattvā kaṣāyaṃ gṛhītvā vihārān nirdhāyate / vajrācāryo 'pi mantrivihārād rājño niyamena / iha punar āryaviṣaye kathaṃ kaṣāyadhāriṇāṃ śvetāmbaradharo gṛhastho gurur vihārādipratiṣṭhākartā / mahān ayaṃ paribhavaḥ / mahatī khalv iyaṃ vivekavikalatā saugatānām yadā amī aparādhadaśāpannān ārādhayanti saty api bhikṣuvajradhare /.

6 See David Seyfort Ruegg, Review of David Snellgrove, Indo-Tibetan Buddhism: Indian Buddhists and their Tibetan Successors, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 1989 (1), p. 173; and 'Sur les Rapports entre le Bouddhisme et le 'substrat religieux' indien et tibétain', *Journal Asiatique* 252 (1964), 7–95.

7 Stephan Beyer, *The Cult of Tārā: Magic and Ritual in Tibet* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973), 42.

8 Translating Haracaritacintāmaṇi 13.74c–83.

9 A pun on the word *bauddha*, which means 'Buddhist' (<*buddha*) or 'intellectual' (<*buddhi*).

10 Haracaritacintāmaṇi, paṭala 17.

11 Ibid. 17.4–9.

12 Herukābhidhānatantra, also called Laghusaṃvaratantra: Kaiser Library Kathmandu, Manuscript 410; Nepal-German Manuscript Preservation Project, Reel No. C 44/3.

13 Jayadrathayāmala, ṣaṭka 3, Yoginīsaṃcāra, samayācāraceṣṭāvidhānapatala, verses 116–148: National Archives, Kathmandu Manuscript 5/1975, Śaivatantra 429; Nepal-German Manuscript Preservation Project, Reel No. A 152/9, folios 208r6–209v2.

14 Siddhayogeśvarīmata, paṭala 29 (unnamed), verses 22c–50: Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta, Manuscript 5465 (Government Collection), folios 69v6–71v3.

15 Abhidhānottarottaratantra, paṭala 43 (dūtīsaukhyāmbupaṭala): Nepal-German Manuscript Preservation Project, Running No. E 15505, Reel No. E695/3, Place of Deposit: Ashakaji Vajracharya, Lalitpur, folios 179r2–183r2.

16 Picumata, paṭala 85: National Archives, Kathmandu, Manuscript 3–370 ('Brahmayāmalatantra'): Nepal German Manuscript Preservation Project, Reel No. A 42/6, folios 326r1–327v3.

17 Saṃvarodaya, paṭala 15: Kaiser Library, Kathmandu, Manuscript No. 749b: Nepal-German Manuscript Preservation Project, Reel No. C 74/1, folios 26r4–27v1.

18 The present author is preparing a monograph in which he edits these parallel passages and demonstrates the relation between them.

19 See Saṃvarodaya, paṭalas 7 and 9 (Shinichi Tsuda [ed & tr]. The Saṃvarodaya-Tantra: Selected Chapters, Tokyo: Hokuseido Press, 1974); also Abhidhānottara, paṭalas 9 and 14; Yoginīsaṃcāra (Buddhist), paṭalas 5 and 13 (National Archives, Kathmandu, Manuscript No. 5–22/vi ['Saṃcāratantrapañjikā']).

20 Tantrasadbhāva, adhikāra 16 (yoginīlakṣaṇa-), verses 60c–68b: National Archives, Kathmandu, Manuscript No. 5–1985, folio 78v9–13: *kulūtāyāṃ araṇyeśe sindhudeśe nageśvare / 60 / samudrakukṣyā<ṃ> saurāṣṭre pretapuryāṃ himālaye / kāñcyāṃ* (Ms: *kaṃcyo) lampākaviṣaye kaliṅge kauśale sthale / 61 / triśaṅkunau* (Ms: *triśaṅkunis) tathā cauḍre* (Ms: *coḍre) kāmarūpe ca mālave / devikoṭe sudhārāme godāvaryās* (Ms: *godāvaryāṃ) taṭe 'rbude / 62 / eṣu* (Ms: *eṣa) deśeṣu yāḥ kanyāḥ* (Ms: *kanyā) striyo vā klinnayonayaḥ / sarvās tāḥ kāmarūpiṇyo manovegānuvṛttayaḥ / 63 / śeṣeṣu yāḥ samutpannā<ḥ> śākinyo ghoramātaraḥ / ṣaḍ yoginyaḥ kulūtāyāṃ araṇyeśe ca mātaraḥ / 64 / sindhudeśe bhaginyas tu nageśe kulanāyikāḥ / samudrakukṣyāṃ* (Ms: *samudrakukṣya) kāmpilyaḥ saurāṣṭre gṛhadevatāḥ / 65 / pretapuryāṃ mahākālyo rūpiṇyo himavadgirau / kāñcyām* (Ms: *kaṃcyām) ambā<ḥ> samākhyātā lampākaviṣaye 'mṛtāḥ / 66 / kaliṅge vratadhāriṇya<ḥ> kauśale piśitāśanāḥ / cakravākyā <ḥ>sthale proktā<s> triśaṅ<ku>nyām amarā <ḥ> smṛtāḥ / 67 / deśadvaye ca śākinyo nāvikā vīranāyikā <ḥ> /.*

21 Tohoku 366.

22 Abhidhānottara, paṭala 1, prose after verse 3 (Ms cit., folio 1 v5–6).

23 See, e.g., Niṣpannayogāvalī 26$^{6-7}$.

24 Ḍākārṇavatantra, paṭala 1, last verse (National Archives, Kathmandu, Manuscript No. 3–447, folio 7v2): *sarvavīrasamāyogād vajrasattvaḥ paraṃ sukham*; paṭala 49 (Ms cit., folio 149r 1): *sarvavīrasamāyogaṃ dhātu<ṃ> sarveṣu cāntaram /.*

25 Saṃvarodaya (ed. Tsuda) 3.6cd; 26.10cd.

26 Abhidhānottara, paṭala 29, verse 7cd: *mahābhairavacarmmeṇa kaṭim āveṣṭya (Ms: āveṣṭha) saṃsthitam /.*

27 Ibid. paṭala 27, verses 4c-5b: *vikalpa bhairavañ caiva tṛṣṇā† rṣā† kālarātryayoḥ / pādākrāntatale kṛtvā sarvadurdāntadāmakaḥ /.*

28 Ibid. paṭala 30, verse 7cd: *bhujadvādaśabhir* (Ms: *-ābhi) yu<k>taṃ śūnyatājñānam uttamam /.*

29 Ibid. paṭala 48, verses 1c-3b: *hūṃkārākṣaraniṣpannaṃ vajraḍākaṃ mahāsukham* (Ms: *māhāsukham) / 1 / ṣaḍbhujaṃ trinetraṃ sarvalakṣaṇalakṣitam / vyañjanāśītisaṃyuktam* (Ms: *-āśiti-) ālikālyudbhavaṃ prabhum / 2 / vārāhyā ca samāpannaṃ śūnyatākaruṇākulam /.*

30 Ibid. paṭala 34, verse 13cd: *mahāmudrāsamāpannaṃ dharmadhātusvabhāvakam /.*

31 Ibid. paṭala 28 (on cult of Praṇavaḍāka), verse 5 to 9: *adha<ḥ>pādatalābje tu durbhagā<n>tīrthikā- <n> kṛtvā / pañcadarśanam ākramya pratyālīḍhapadakramāt* (Ms: *līḍhapratyālīḍhapadākramāt) / 5 / ... viṣṇucarmanivasanaṃ muṇḍamālāvibhūṣitaṃ* (Ms: *-tāḥ) /6/ ... brahmacarmavitānāṅga karadvayena tu dhāryatam* (Ms: *-tāṃ) / kapālakhaṭvāṅgadharaṃ* (Ms: *-rā) maheśvaramuṇḍadhāryatam* (Ms: *tāṃ) /.*

32 Jayadrathayāmala, ṣaṭka 2, paṭala 21, verses 8c to 14 (National Archives, Kathmandu, Manuscript No. 5–4650, folio 80r1–5): *catuścakreśvarīśeyaṃ bhairavotsaṅgagāminī / 8 / prathamaṃ bhairavaṃ devaṃ mahāpātakanāśanam / ... daśabhūmīsvara-ṃbuddhapratikarṇāvalambitam / aṣṭā ye krodharājāno herukādyā mahābalā<ḥ> / 12 / teṣāṃ muṇḍāntrasragdāmavasāmāṃsāsthibhojanam / manaścandramahāsthāne tārādyā yāś ca śaktayaḥ / 13 / tāsāṃ cūḍākalāpena † vaktrayuktera† bhāsvatā / yajñopavītam urasā dhārayantaṃ subhairavam / 14 / ...*

33 Jayadrathayāmala, ṣaṭka 3, paṭala 4, verses 26 to 27 (Ms cit., folio 28r8-v1): *kopolbaṇamahākāla-* (Ms: *-larṇ) muṇḍadattaika* (Ms: *-daṃtaika-) pādikām / ghoraherukakaṅkālanyastapādadvitīyakām / 25 / krodharājāṣṭakaṃ bhīma<ṃ> bhairavendratathāgatān* (MS: *-tāḥ) / saṃcūrṇayantīrṇ tān* (?. Ms: *– aṃtīsā) ghorapādāghātair bhayānakām / 26 /.*

34 For the formulae, and the meditations on the four *brahmavihāras*, mind-only and emptiness as the prelimaries of sādhana see Sādhanamālā (ed. Benoytosh Bhattacharyya, Gaekwad's Oriental Series No. 26, Baroda: Oriental Institute, 1925), 458^{18}–459^{8}

(Mahāmāyāsādhana), 466$^{3-12}$ (Vajraḍākasādhana), 468$^{19-20}$ (Herukasādhana) etc. For the resorption of *hūṃ* see, e.g., the Cakrasaṃvarapū-jāvidhi (Nepal-German Manuscript Preservation Project, Running No. 791 D, Reel No. D 35/28, folios 1v–23v), folio 20r4–1: *hūṃkāraṃ mahāsukhamayaṃ bhāvayet / candram ūkāre ūkāraṃ hakāre hakāraṃ śirasi śiro 'rdhacandre 'rdhacandraṃ bindau binduṃ nāde nādaṃ bālāgraś atasahasrabhāgarūpaṃ nirvikalpaṃ mahāsukhamayaṃ cittaṃ nirūpayet /*

35 See, e.g., Svacchandatantra (ed. Paṇḍit Madhusudan Kaul, Kashmir Series of Texts and Studies, Bombay: Research Department, Jammu and Kashmir State, 1921–1935) 4.525–529c. Here two the seed-syllable is *hūṃ* (the seed of Niṣkala-Svacchandabhairava, the high deity of this Tantra).

36 See Debala Mitra, *Buddhist Monuments* (Calcutta: Sahitya Samsad, 1971), 19: "The radically-reoriented religion evoked protests from the orthodox monks of Ceylon and Sindh. According to the Tibetan monk Dharmasvāmin (p. 64) and Lāmā Tāranātha, the Ceylonese Śrāvakas at Vajrāsana described Vajrayāna as being foreign to the teachings of the Buddha. They put into fire many mantra books, destroyed the silver image of Heruka and tried to convince the pilgrims about the uselessness of the Vajrayāna teachings."

37 See Kriyāsamuccaya (ed. Lokesh Chandra, Śatapiṭaka Series Vol. 237, Delhi: Sharada Rani, 1977 [photographic reproduction of a Ms]) 323^{8}–324^{4}: *anena manaḥkarmapradhānatām asya yānasya darśayaty avirodhārtham / prakṛtisāvadye 'pi hi karmaṇi samutthānaviśeṣād anāpattir bhagavatā bahuśaḥ prakāśitā / tathā ca "caṇḍālaveṇukārādyā māraṇārthārthacintakāḥ / te 'pi hevajramārgasthāḥ siddhyante nātra saṃśayaḥ /" api ca "nāpattiḥ śubhacittasya snehāc caiva dayāvataḥ / niṣiddhaṃ apy anujñātaṃ kṛpālor arthadarśinaḥ" iti / yaḥ punar upacitapuṇyabāhuśrutyādibhiḥ sarvadharmān svapnasamān śūnyataikarasān sadṛḍham adhimuñcati tasya bhikṣuvajradharasaṃvarayoḥ kva virodhagandho 'pi / ata evoktaṃ bhagavatā "bhikṣuṃ vajradharaṃ kuryād" ity avaśyaṃ caitad abhyupeyam /*, "Hereby he shows, in order to avoid contradiction, that the emphasis of this Way is upon mental action. For the Lord has taught many times that even if the action is sinful by nature there is no offence if it has an (appropriate) cause. Thus: "Even untouchables, reed-cutters and the like, men who profit by killing (?), attain the goal if they enter this path of Hevajra. Of this there is no doubt." And: "There is no offence when the action is of one whose intention is good, who acts out of affection, who is compassionate. Even the forbidden is allowed in the case of the man who is compassionate and intent on the welfare of others." But he who by virtue of such factors as his accumulated merit and great learning has achieved the firm conviction that all phenomena are like illusions or dream images and identical with emptiness cannot be subject even to the slightest trace of a contradiction between his vows as a monk and his vows as a Vajra Master. Therefore the Lord has said: "One may make a monk a Vajra Master . . ." This must be recognized"; ibid. 324^{7}-: *yadi punar durjanagocaraḥ pradeśaḥ syāt tadā tasyāpi jñānamudrayā guhyaprajñājñānābhiṣekau dātavyau / durjanāsaṃbhave tu karmamudraiva / adṛḍhādhimokṣasya tu bhikṣoḥ śrāddhasyāpi bāhyaprajñayābhiṣekagrahaṇaṃ niṣiddham / anyathā pūrvasaṃvarabhraṃśān mahān anarthaḥ syāt / yadi punar guruḥ sthirabhāvako bhavati tadā tenārpitāyāṃ jñānārpitāyāṃ jñānamudrāyāṃ tasyāpi prajñājñānābhiṣeko deyo gṛhṇataś ca nābrahmacaryeṇa kāpy āpattir bhavet / karmakāyābhāvāt / tasya tu prāggṛhasthāvasthāvasthāyām anubhū-tasukhasya smaraṇenānandādibhedāḥ pratipādayitavyāḥ / guror api sati bhikṣutve guhyābhiṣekādidāne sarvam uktam anusaṃdheyam /*, "But if the region is the home of evil men, then he may give the candidate the Secret Empowerment [*guhyābhiṣeka*] and the Empowerment of the Knowledge of Wisdom [*prajñājñānābhiṣeka*] through a Knowledge Seal [i.e., a nonphysical consort]. However, if there are no such evil men, only the Action Seal

[i.e. the physical consort] will be adequate. This is so unless the monk lacks firm conviction [in the illusory nature of phenomena]. In that case, even if he is a faithful Buddhist, he is forbidden to take these empowerments with an external Wisdom [i.e. consort]. If he were to do so, it would be a great ill; for he would then be guilty of breaking his vows. Rather, if his guru is capable of sustained contemplative realization he must impart the Empowerment of the Knowledge of Wisdom to him by giving him a Knowledge Seal; for in receiving 'her' he will not be guilty of abandoning his chastity. If he has been a married man before [his ordination] he can be taught the various Joys (*ānanda* etc.) [in the fourth Empowerment [*caturthābhiṣeka*]] through his memory of the sexual pleasure he experienced then. All that has been said about giving the Empowerments that begin with the Secret should be applied to the case of the initiating guru, if he is a monk."

38 See David Gellner, *Monk, Householder, and Tantric Priest: Newar Buddhism and its Hierarchy of Ritual* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 273–281, 297–304. Gellner gives an ordered account of the ritual of initiation in the cult of Śaṃvara and Vajravārāhī following the verbal testimony of Newar Vajrācāryas. This account agrees almost entirely with the record of Newar practice preserved in the ritual manuals; see, e.g., Nepal-German Manuscript Preservation Project, Running No. E 1093/5 (Dīkṣāvidhi), E 1203/3; Asha Saphu Kuti Bubi 84 (Dīkṣāvidhāna), ibid. 85 (Dīkṣā-vidhāna), ibid. 45 (Dīkṣāvidhāna), ibid. 47.

Further reading

Stephan Beyer, *The Cult of Tārā: Magic and Ritual in Tibet* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973).

David N. Gellner, *Monk, Householder, and Tantric Priest: Newar Buddhism and its Hierarchy of Ritual* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992)

Per Kvaerne, 'On the Concept of Sahaja in Indian Buddhist Tantric Literature', *Temenos* 11 (1975), 88–135.

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ŚĀKYAMUNI'S ENLIGHTENMENT ACCORDING TO THE YOGA TANTRA

Tadeusz Skorupski

Source: *Nagoya Studies in Indian Culture and Buddhism*, Saṃbhāṣā 6 (1985): 87–94.

According to the Yoga Tantra, Śākyamuni attained to the supreme and perfect enlightenment not at Buddhagayā but in the *Akaniṣṭha Ghanavvyūha* Paradise.[1] In the *Sarvatathāgatatattva-saṃgraha* (=STTS), the *mūla tantra* of the Yoga Tantra class, the event of Śākyamuni's enlightenment is described in the manner of a dialogue between all the assembled *Tathāgatas* and *Siddhārtha*. The gradual ascent from the fundamental understanding of the mind (*citta*) through the intermediate stages of mystical experience to the crutial moment culminating in *Siddhārtha's* Buddhahood is outlined in five consecutive stages called the five *abhisambodhis* (in Tibetan *mṅon-par-'tshaṅ-rgya-ba* or *mṅon-par-byaṅ-chub*); each *sambodhi* being characterized by its own particular *mantra*, state of meditation and appropriate visualization.[2]

Before embarking on discussing in some detail the five *adhisambodhis*, let us consider briefly the circumstances which preceded them and the actual site at which they took place. In STTS in the introductory passage which is followed by the description of the *abhisambodhis* we read that Buddha *Vairoccana* as the supreme of the *Pañcatathāgatas* surrounded by an entourage consisting of *Tathāgatas* and *Bodhisattvas* was residing in the abode of the king of the *Akaniṣṭha* gods. It was therein that all the *Tathāgatas* assembled together because *Siddhārtha* sat down under the *bodhi* tree with a firm resolve to gain the state of supreme Buddhahood.

In the *Vajraśekhara*, the explanatory *tantra*, it is said that Śākyamuni after his arduous ascetic feats reached the final Stage (*sa-mtha'*).[3] Having received the garment consecration he took residence in the *Akaniṣṭha Ghanavyūha* abode under the name of *Mahāmati*, and made a final resolve to become a Buddha for the sake of all living beings.

The most important commentaries on the STTS were written by three renowned Indian scholars, namely Buddhaguhya, Śākyamitra and Ānandagarbha.

They provided us with the following interpretations relevant to the circumstance of Śākyamuni's enlightenment.

Buddhaguhya and Śākyamitra maintained that Śākyamuni from the time of his birth as *Sidhārtha* and the son of *Śuddhodana* to the moment of practising severe austerities on the banks of the *Nairañjanā* River had all the essential characteristics of a *Bodhisattva* of the tenth Stage (*bhūmi*). After six years of ascetic vicissitudes he entered into four successive trances (*dhyāna*).[4] It was during the fourth trance that the Buddhas of the ten directions interrupted his meditation and having instructed him that it was impossible to gain Buddhahood by meditation alone, they left his perfected phisical body (*vipākakāya*) on the bank of the *Nairañjanā* River and conducted his knowledge body (*manomayakāya*) to *Akaniṣṭha* where they first bestowed upon him the diadem consecration (*mukuṭābhiṣeka*) and then made him pursue the five *abhisambodhis*. After the completion of the fifth *abhisambodhi Siddhārtha* attained to the supreme Buddhahood. Immediately after that he performed the four Miraculous Activities,[5] went to the summit of Mt Meru to proclaim the *Yoga Tantra* teachings, and then descending down to earth he joined his phisical body and performed the remaining deeds of his earthly life.[6]

Ānandagarbha in his *Tattvāloka* explains that after amassing the store of merit and knowledge (*punyajñānasambhāra*) for three incalculable *kalpas* and when he was born in his last life as a *Bodhisattva* of the tenth Stage, *Śākyamuni* entered the four *dhyānas* in the *Akaniṣṭha* abode. He was drawn out from his meditation, received the diadem consecration and then became a perfect Buddha by means of the five *abhisambodhis*. After the performance of the four Miraculous Activities and the proclamation of the *Yoga Tantra* on the summit of Mt Meru, he descended to earth and was born as the son of *Śuddhodana* and accomplished the remaining activities of the twelve Buddha Acts.

A modified version of *Śākyamuni's* enlightenment is provided in the *rDo-rje-sñiṅ-po-rgyanrgyu* quoted by *Bu-ston* where it is said that *Śākyamuni* on hearing supplications, left *Akaniṣṭha*, took residence in the *Tuṣita* Heaven where he proclaimed *Dharma* to the resident gods and then was born into the *Śākya* Clan.

What is then the essential notion of the *Akaniṣṭha* Paradise? *bSod-nams-rtse-mo* (1142–1182), the second of the five *Sa-skya* masters explains in his General Introduction to the *Tantras* that it is for the benefit of *Jambudvīpa* that the best of the *Śākyas* penetrate into the Supreme Truth (*paramārtha*) in the *Akaniṣṭha* Heaven just as it is stated in the *Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra* that the perfect Buddhas gain their Buddhahood in *Akaniṣṭha* and then through their *nirmāṅakāyas* manifest themselves on the earth. As for the saying in the STTS that *Vairocana* and his entourage resided in *Akaniṣṭha* in the place of the king of the gods, it implies that the *Akaniṣṭha* gods are the *Bodhisattvas* of the tenth Stage. As for the exact location of *Akaniṣṭha*, some people say that it is a pure and aloof abode, some consider it as the residence of *Maheśvara*, and yet other people thinking in terms of this world's impermanence assume it to be an indestructible sphere. These

explanations, continues *bSod-nams-rtse-mo*, are rather inadequate because they do not define *Akaniṣṭha* as the place with its precincts divided into different sections, and as the residence of the Buddhas manifested in their *saṃbhogakāyas* who give instructions to the *Bodhisattvas* of the tenth Stage. The most comprehensive explanation, according to *bSod-nams-rtse-mo*, comes from the *Buddhāvatāmsaka* where it is said that the whole ocean of different worlds is contained within the palm of the *Tathāgata Vairocana* who, abiding in his perfect Wisdom, resides together with the Great *Bodhisattvas* (*Mahābodhisattva* = *Bodhisattva* of the tenth Stage) in the *Ghanavyūha* Sphere, the abode of the perfect Buddhas manifested in their *sambhogakāyas*. Within the *Ghanavyūha* Sphere there are several different realms one of which is destined for the Buddhas in their *nirmāṇakāyas* who in due succession of their heroic achievements appear in *Jambudvīpa*.

There are of course other descriptions and interpretations of the *Akaniṣṭha* Paradise but for our purpose here it will be sufficient to become aware that for the *Yoga Tantra* the *Akaniṣṭha* abode denominates the residence of the Buddhas manifested in their *sambhogakāyas* and the place of enlightenment of the Great *Bodhisattvas*.

Now we come to consider the first *abhisambodhi*. In the STTS it is described as follows. The *Tathāgatas* manifested themselves in their *sambhogakāyas* before the *Bodhisattva Siddhārtha* and addressed him in these words: "O noble son, how will you gain the perfect Buddhahood (*sambodhi*) while you are enduring all the sorrows (*sarvaduḥkha*) on account of your unawareness (*anabhijñā*) of the Truth (*tattva*) of all the *Tathāgatas?' Siddhārtha* emerged from his imperturbable (*āsphānaka*)[7] meditation and begged saying: "O Lord *Tathāgatas*, please instruct me. What is the essence of the *Tathāgatas* and how am I to accomplish it." The *Tathāgatas* answered: "O noble son, pondering in your mind enter into an equipoise and reciting this self-perfected *mantra* achieve the goal: OM CITTA-PRATIVEDHAṂ KAROMI." The *Bodhisattva* addressed the Buddhas: "O Lord *Tathāgatas*, I perceive in my heart a form of a lunar disc." And the *Tathāgatas* explained: "O noble son, this mind (*citta*) is the Clear Light by its own nature (*prakrti-prabhāsvara*). As one purifies it, so it becomes just as a white cloth stained with colour."

In the *Vajraśekhara* we read in the relevant passage that the *Bodhisattva Mahāmati* was awakened from his meditation by the *Tathāgatas* by pronouncing the *mantra* OṂ VAJRAUTTIṢṬHA and by snapping their fingers. As he arose from his meditation he perceived an ocean of Buddhas and bowing before them he asked them for instructions and the Buddhas spoke up:

> "What is like the sphere of activities of the mind? They said. As for the mind, it is the perfect discernment (*pratyavekṣanā*). Having heard the voice of all the *Tathāgatas* he remained for a long time deliberating in his mind but did not perceive the form of his mind. Having exhausted all the different possibilities he made a request: O Lord *Tathāgatas*,

> I do not perceive the form of my mind. What are like then the primary characteristics (*mtshan-ñid*) of the mind? The the *Tathāgatas* said: It is difficult to know the mind's sphere of activity. We give you this *hṛdaya* OṂ CITTA-PRATIVEDHAṂ KAROMI. Perform a subtle recitation! Having received this pure spell, he pondered it over in his mind accordingly and in that very instant he duly perceived a lunar disc.
>
> What is this mind? Is it the source of the defilements (*kleśa*) or is it the mind of virtue or non-virtue (*kuśala-akuśala*), or is it the mind endowed with the seed of the primordial substratum (*ālaya, kun-gżi*)? After receiving and understanding the substance of *Dharma*, *Siddhārtha* adhered to the Six *Pāramitās* and became a purified being. Totally free from the defilements he amassed for a long period of time the store of merit and knowledge. Just like the full moon, pure and unimpeded in its brightness, his mind too, on account of the perfect merit and knowledge, was like the full moon; it was in a state of neither becoming nor non-becoming (*bhāva-abhāva*). In the same way just like the full moon, the great merit and knowledge showed themselves as a moon. Being endowed with the store of merit and knowledge he perceived the lunar disc of his mind. He rejoiced and showed devotion and then he spoke once more: O Lord Protectors, I, being free from all defilements and impurities perceive my mind, free of the subject-object relation, as a lunar disc."[8]

It is evident from the above citation that the fundamental notion of the first *abhisambodhi* is the understanding of the true nature of the mind (*cittadharmatā*).

Buddhaguhya and Ānandagarbha disagree as to the clarity and appearance of the lunar disc. Buddhaguhya in his *Tantrārthāvatāra* says that *Siddhārtha* saw a lunar disc which was empty inside and which resembled the part of the moon of the first day of the month. Firstly, he argues, *Siddhārtha* saw a lunar disc because he abandoned all the impurities of the *skandhas*, *dhātus*, *āyatanas*[9], the subject-object manner of thinking and so forth by means of the undisputed tenet of the Teaching that all the *dharmas* have no true nature of their own. But this vision of a lunar disc was impaired because after the elimination of the haze (*khug-rna*) of the dust of the *samsāra's* impregnations (*vāsanā*) his mind became purified but since it was endowed with somewhat minute impregnations of *Dharma*, pure from eternity, the form of the lunar disc remained imperfect. So long as the accumulation of merit and knowledge remain imperfect, there is no vision of one perfect moon. However on account of one's knowledge together with the appropriate fruition, the residence (*gnas*) of the impregnation of the pure and timeless *Dharma* comes into vision.

Ānandagarbha argues that it was a vision of a perfect lunar disc because *Siddhārtha's* mind was abiding in its own true naturre and by its own nature the mind is the Clear Light (*'od-gsal*). This notion of the mind as the Clear Light is

very much stressed by *Bu-ston* in his Introduction to the *Yoga Tantra*. *Bu-ston* also eleborates on another interpretation which purports that in this *abhisambodhi* through the means of meditation and the recitation of the *mantra*, the mind's foundation as *dharmadhātu*, beginningless and infinite, becomes manifested as having the nature of the sixteenfold *Śūnyatā*, and then as the consequence of the supramundane knowledge being born within oneself, one perceives a lunar disc. He further elaborates that in the first instant the relative truth (*kun-rdzob*) perceives a vision which is like a mirage (*mig-yor*) but subsequently the *dharmatā* of the mind endowed with perfect understanding (*abhisamaya*) manifests itself, assuming the form of a lunar disc.

Yet another interpretation of this *abhisambodhi* is provided by Śākyamitra in his *Kosalālamkāra*. *Siddhārtha* had difficulties in becoming a Buddha by means of the four *dhyānas*, says Śākyamitra, because the *āsphānaka* meditation is a state of a total isolation in which the bodily and mental activities are suspended. By entering such a meditation he became completely isolated and consequently unable to pursue the activities for the benefit of other living beings; and this was the chief reason why *Siddhārtha* failed in his efforts and was awakened from his meditation. Furthermore the conversation that ensued between the *Bodhisattva* and the Buddhas demonstrates the teacher-disciple relationship. The knowledge in the manner of reciting *mantras*, the characteristics of the pledges (*samaya*), the consecrations, the wisdom of the sages, and the benefit of others come from the teacher. Thus without respect for one's *guru*, it is impossible to achieve the fruition of the *mantras*. *Siddhārtha* was a disciple endowed with excellent qualities and with sense-faculties perfected he was well disposed to gain Buddhahood. However, although his accomplished merit and knowledge became a perfect repository for the primary cause (or motivation-*hetu*), his maturation-state was not completely perfect because there existed an abstacle of inspiration (*luṅ*). *Siddhārtha*, continues Śākyamitra, by discerning in his mind and by meditation alone did not progress towards the supreme goal. Discerning in one's mind or applying one's mind for the sake of understanding the *skandhas* and the rest, or retaining it in a state without a meditative object, or even *pratyavekṣaṇa* combined with meditation are insufficient. The inefficacy of the above means was compensated by providing *Siddhārtha* with a self-perfected *mantra*. Thus with the help of such a perfect *mantra* he pursued in his mind the notion of the True Nature in order to bring to perfection his own nature (*bdag-gi-ṅo-bo*) in compliance with the primary cause. Then in order to demonstrate the kind of knowledge which he apprehended the store-conciousness (*ālayavijñāna*), perfectly pure, became present in the form of the Mirror-like-Wisdom (*ādarśajñāna*).

The second *abhisambodhi*. Next the *Tathāgatas* in order to increase the knowledge of *Siddhārtha's* translucent mind taught him the manner of raising the thought of enlightenment of the Great *Bodhisattvas* with the following *mantra:* OM BODHICITTAM UTPADAYĀMI, and they instructed him to comprehend this *hṛdaya* of the *Tāthagatas* as the thought-generating *Samantabhadra*. Since his mind was purified from the subject-object impregnations, he

perceived it as All-Good (*Samantabhadra*) and as the primary cause of all the perfect thoughts of all living beings, and also as the Mind-essence of all the *Tathāgatas*. This kind of germinated thought of enlightenment resulted in gaining the Wisdom of Sameness (*samatājñāna*).

According to *bSod-nams-grags-pa*, *Siddhārtha* perceived here in a direct manner the true nature of the mind (*cittadharmatā*), which he equates with *śūnyatā*.[10] According to Buddhaguhya, in the first *abhisambodhi* one is blessed (*byin-gyis-rlabs*) and reaches the level of perfection resulting from the study of the *Pāramitās* and the practice of the *Bodhisattva-bhūmis*. In the second *abhisambodhi* one acquires the mind which has the nature of enlightenment gained and perfectly understood by the *Tathāgatas*. The thought of enlightenment as a *hṛdaya* is the Mind of the *Tathāgatas* which comprises the wisdom of all the Omniscient Ones.

Bu-ston equates the mind's true nature with the Clear Light and explains that once the mind becomes purged from the subject-object impregnations, all the subtle impurities are removed and the mind becomes translucent. The purification from the impregnations is accomplished at this stage by the Supreme Truth and as the mind understands its own true nature to be the Clear Light, it becomes further expanded by the perfect knowledge (*abhisamaya*).

In the third *abhisambodhi*, in order to fortify and to make steady the thought-generating *Samantabhadra* of all the *Tathāgatas*, *Siddhārtha* received the following *mantra:* OṂ TIṢṬHA VAJRA; and he was instructed to envisage a *vajra* inside the lunar disc resting in his heart. At this stage the thought generating *Samantabhadra* assumed the form of a *vajra* imbued with the essence of all the *Tathāgatas*. His mind became endowed with the five-pronged *vajra* symbolizing *Śūnyatā* which had the nature of the Five Buddha-Wisdoms, and in particular he gained in this *abhisambodhi* the Discrimating Wisdom (*pratyavekṣana*) of perfect and unerring understanding.

In the fourth *abhisambodhi* in order to stabilize the *Samantabhadra-vajra*, *Siddhārtha* was given to recite and to contemplate the following *mantra:* OṂ VAJRA-ĀTMAKO 'HAM. This being accomplished, the spheres of the Body, Speech and Mind of all the *Tathāgatas* through their blessing penetrated the *vajra* in the *Bodhisattva's* heart. Next the *Tathāgatas* bestowed upon him the *vajra-name* consecration of *Vajradhātu*. As a result the *Bodhisattva Vajradhātu* perceived himself as having the Body of all the *Tathāgatas*. Furthermore, as the *mahāmudrā* of the Body-sphere of the Five Buddha-Families, the Secrets of their Speech-sphere, and the *vajra* of their Mind-sphere penetrated the *vajra* in *Vajradhātu's* heart, he became endowed with the Body-sphere (*sku-dbyiṅs*) of *Vairocana*. Having been thus imbued with the *vajra*-nature of all the *Tathāgatas*, he perceived himself as possessing a *Tathāgata*-Body. In addition to that, since the goal of liberation (*rnam-par-thar-pa*) in its own nature is the Clear Light, *Vajradhātu* obtained here the Active Wisdom (*kṛtya-anuṣṭhāna-jñāna*) of pursuing the welfare and good of all the living beings.

With the *mantra* OṂ YATHĀ-SARVATATHĀGATĀS-TATHĀ-AHAM,

bestowed during the fifth *abhisambodhi*, the *Bodhisattva Vajradhātu* gained the supreme Buddhahood as *Vairocana* who represents or epitomizes all the Buddhas, and who is manifested at this stage as *Mahāvairocana* in his *sambhogakāya*.

From the *vajra*-form of the third *abhisambodhi* there evolved a Buddha-Body of the fourth *abhisambodhi* with which *Vajradhātu* identified himself, but he did not as yet fully perceive it as being enodowed with the major and minor auspicious bodily marks (*lakṣaṇa* & *upalakṣaṇa*). It was in the fifth *adhisambodhi* that he completely understood, perceived and gained a perfect Buddha-Body and acquired the Absolute Wisdom (*dharmadhātu-jñāna*) becoming thus a perfectly enlightened Buddha.

On the completion of the five *abhisambodhis* the newly enlightened Buddha received consecrations[11] to stabilize his Buddhahood. All the Buddhas and *Bodhisattvas* became manifested and then the main teachings of the *Yoga Tantra* were pronounced.

The five *abhisambodhis* by being placed at the beginning of the *mūlatantra*, the STTS, serve as a declaration or a manifest of the Yoga Tantra's position and they are meant to provide a general framework for various practices expounded in the main body of the Yoga Tantra teachings. By attributing this particular manner of experiencing the five *abhisambodhis* to *Śākyamuni* Buddha, the Yoga Tantra justifies its practices and all its scriptures assume the same importance and validity as the canonical scriptures of other schools. Furthermore through this particular exposition of the five *abhisambodhis* the Yoga Tantra demonstrates that the manner of gaining enlightenment as presented by other traditions (especially the *triyānas*) is quite inadequate, and in particular it demonstrates that philosophy or thinking alone does not bring about a spiritual realisation. The previous traditions and philosophies connected with them are not rejected as such but they are made used of as a starting point. It is insufficient to train the mind alone but it is necessary to imbue it with the essence and nature of the *Tathāgatas*. The Yoga Tantra takes for granted the knowledge of different philophical schools and makes use of them for its own purposes. Philosophy as such, it is quite evident, is consigned to the very first stage of spiritual life. It reaches its apex in the first *abhisambodhi* or perhaps even that much cannot be said for already at this stage an intervention of the *Tathāgatas* is apparent.

If we examine the terminology employed to explain the successive *abhisambodhis* we can see clearly that the Yoga Tantra introduces some unification into all different philosophical interpretations of the reality and shows indirectly a basic unity of those interpretations provided that one retains a clear awareness of their different levels of reference. We encounter constantly the technical terminology which refers to the nature of the mind (*cittadharmatā*), to the nature of the relative and absolute reality as explained by the *śūnyatā* or *ālayavijñāna* interpretations, and of course the *trikāya* theory. Different terms such as *cittatā*, *dharmatā*, *śūnyatā* or *prabhāsvara* are employed almost at the same time as an indication that they refer to the same reality from different angles or through different

approaches. It is only when they are as if combined together that one is able to gain a sufficiently comprehensive understanding of the whole reality before one embarks on the mystical experience portrayed in the five *abhisambodhis*.

Finally in the five *abhisambodhis* one can see the Yoga Tantra's contribution to the Buddhist thought and religious practices, namely the method of visualization and gradual identification with the supreme Buddhahood, the introduction of consecrations as necessary aids and the use of various objects such as vajra or moon which receive a special symbolic meaning.

Notes

1 Here below are listed the main sources for this short study.

Sarvatathāgatatattvasaṃgraha; Facsimile reproduction of a tenth century Sanskrit manuscript from Nepal. Reproduced by Lokesh Chandra and David L. Snellgrove. Śatapiṭaka Series vol. 269, New Delhi 1981. This work contains an excellent introduction by David Snellgrove in which he gives a succinct summary of the whole *tantra* and gives lists of different *maṇḍalas*.

Sarvatathāgatatattvasaṅgraha nāma mahāyāna sūtra; A critical edition based on a Sanskrit manuscript and Chinese and Tibetan translations. Edited by Isshi Yamada, Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois. Printed in New Delhi, 1981; pp.3–10.

Vajraśikhara-mahāguhyayogatantra; Tibetan translation in the Tibetan Tripitaka (= T.T.), Pekin Edition of the Otani University, No. 113, vol. 5, pp.1–3

Tattvāloka of Ānandagarbha, T.T. No. 3333, vol. 71, pp. 146–212.

Kosalālaṃkāra of Śākyamitra, T.T. No. 3326, vol. 70, pp. 191–203.

Tantrārthāvatāra of Buddhaguhya, T.T. No. 3324, vol. 70, pp. 33–73.

rGyud-sde-spyi' i-rnam-par-bźag-pa skal-bzaṅ-gi-yid-' phrog ces-bya-ba by Paṇchen bSod-nams-grags pa. Published by the Library of Tibetan Works & Archives, Dharamsala, 1975.

rGyud-sde-spyi' i-rnam-par-gźag-pa by bSod-nams-rtse-mo, in the Sa-skya-pa'i bka'-'bum, the Toyo Bunko 1968, vol. 2, folio 41a onwards.

rNal-'byor-rgyud-rgya-mtshor-' jug-pa' i-gru-gziṅs-źes-bya-ba by Bu-ston. The Collected Works of Bu-ston, part 11, Śatapiṭaka Series vol. 51, fol. 1–11.

2 It might be of use to outline here briefly Śākyamuni's enlightenment as presented by other Buddhist schools. For this short exposition I make use of *bSod-nams-grags-pa's* introduction to the tantras listed in the previous note.

According to the *Śrāvaka* Vehicle Śākyamuni raised the thought of enlightenment befr.e Mahāśākyamuni and then accumulated merit and knowledge during three successive neons. At the end of amassing merit and knowledge he was born as Siddhārtha and son of Śuddhodana. At the age of thirty-five, on the 15th day of the last month of the spring and at dusk he subdued Māra. At midnight while he was seated in meditative equipoise he manifested the path of preparation, the path of vision and the path of meditation. At dawn he gained the perfect Buddhahood. He performed these acts as a man. At the age of eighty he passed into nirvāṇa and the continuance of his knowledge was cut off like an extinguished candle.

According to the *Prajñāpāramitā* school Śākyamuni after the three aeons of amassing merit and knowledge and pursuing the Bodhisattva Stages reached his final state. He then received from the Buddhas a consecration known as 'Great Light'. Next during the first and second instances of his adamantine concentration he gained *Dharmakāya* and *Sambhogakāya* becoming thus a perfect Buddha. His *Sambhogakāya* took residence in the *Akaniṣṭha* Heaven and his *Nirmāṇakāya* performed the twelve Buddha acts in *Jambudvīpa*.

In the *anuttara tantras* such as the *Kālacakra* or *Hevajra* we find no explanation of Śākyamuni's enlightenment. It is however expounded by Āryadeva's and Jñānapāda's schools. These two schools put forward basically the same exposition. They set forth two possibilities concerning a Bodhisattva's last life and enlightenment. One is that a Bodhisattva of the tenth Stage is bound to one more rebirth and the other that a Bodhisattva of the tenth Stage gains Buddhahood during that very last life. Thus according to these schools Śākyamuni after amassing his merit and knowledge through the practice of the *Pāramitās* entered in the *Akaniṣṭha* Heaven a state of concentration known as 'Space-pervading'. The Buddhas interrupted his meditation, summoned a divine maiden called Tilottamā and bestowed upon him the third consecration. Then he pursued the successive *abhisambodhis*. At midnight through dissolving into three successive kinds of Emptiness he perceived the Clear Light of the Universal Emptiness. By doing this he gained the union (*zuṅ-' jug*) of learning. After receiving the fourth consecration he performed the Buddha acts, and then entering into a meditation which was like a *vajra* he purified all obstructions to knowledge and gained the union beyond learning becoming thus a perfect Buddha.

3 For an exposition of the Bodhisattva *bhūmis* see Har Dayal's *The Bodhisattva Doctrine in Buddhist Sanskrit Literature*, London 1932, reprinted in Delhi, 1970.

4 For different kinds of meditation see *Mahāyāna Buddhist Meditation:* Theory and Practice, edited by Minoru Kiyota, Honolulu, 1978, and Edward Conze's *Buddhist Meditation*, London 1956.

5 The four Miraculous Activities (*cho-' phrul-rnam-pa-bżi*) are the following ones: 1. Blessing (*byin-gyis-rlobs*), 2. Consecration (*dbaṅ-bskur-ba*), 3. Meditative concentration (*tiṅ-ṅe-'dzin*), and 4. Wondrous Acts (*phrin-las*); bSod-nams grags pa folio 5b.

6 The twelve Buddha Acts described by bSod-nams-grags-pa are listed in the following order: 1. Descent from the *Tuṣita* Heaven, 2. Entering the womb, 3. Birth, 4. Learning and skilfulness in arts, 5. Enjoyment with women, 6. Departure from the palace, 7. Practice of austerities, 8. Approach to the place of enlightenment, 9. Defeat of Māra, 10. Gaining enlightenment, 11. Proclamation of *Dharma*, 12. Passing into *parinirvāṇa*.

7 Thus in STTS page 7 and translated into Tibetan (T.T. vol. 4, p.219–4–7) as *mi-g.yo-ba'i tiṅ-ṅe-' dzin*. This *samādhi* is also referred to as *āspharaṇaka* in different texts.

8 *Vajraśikhara* p. 3–1–1 to 7.

9 For these technical terms see Th. Stcherbatsky's *The Central Philosophy of Buddhism* and the Meaning of the word Dharma, reprinted in Delhi 1970.

10 On the various aspect and interpretation of this term see T.R.V. Murti's The Central Philosophy of Buddhism, London, 1955, reprinted 1970.

11 The consecrations as a part of the five *abhisambodhis* are not explained in great detail by the commentaries. A good interpretation of them in this connection can be found in bSod-nams-rtse-mo's introduction to the tantras folio 43b onwards. I may add here that the four consecrations bestowed upon the newly enlightened Buddha are interpreted in terms of the Buddha Bodies. The first consecration is called the Vajrasattva consecration and it bestows the nature of *Svabhāvakāya;* the second one Vajradharma bestows *Sambhogakāya;* the third of Vajraratna bestows the Buddha *lakṣaṇa* and *upalakṣaṇa;* and the fourth of Vajrakarma bestows the nature of *Nirmāṇakāya*.

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A CRITICAL TANTRISM

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1. General remarks: the 'critical' character of Tantric Buddhism

i. Buddhist Tantrism on the ridge

In trying to get a total image of the history of the Tantric thought of Buddhism in India, it is first necessary for us to observe the diametrically opposed characters of the *Vairocanābhisaṁbodhi-sūtra*[1] (大日經) and the *Tattvasaṁgraha-tantra*[2] (金剛頂經) i.e. the two greatest scriptures of the *Shingon*-sect (眞言宗) of Japan. These two scriptures include two opposite ideas or logics; one the Mahāyānic idea of the accumulation of two kinds of merits, *viz*. moral and intellectual (福智二資糧), or the logic of action and its result (*karman* 業), the other the Tantric idea of the essential union of the individual existence with the ultimate reality, or the logic of yogic practice.

I would like to depict the point of contact of these two scriptures metaphorically as the sharp ridge of a mountain upon which one cannot find an inch of flat place upon which to balance onself. Ascending to the uppermost part of the slope of Mahāyāna Buddhism, that is, the first chapter of the *Vairocanābhisaṁbodhi-sūtra*, we find ourselves facing the dizzy precipice of Tantrism which starts from the *Tattvasaṁgraha-tantra* at the opposite side of knife-edged ridge.

The theoretical part of the *Vairocanābhisaṁbodhi-sūtra* i.e. the first chapter, may well be regarded as the summit of Mahāyāna Buddhism due to its magnificent and harmonious image of the world, its deep insight into the reality of human life and its noble, lofty ideal of life reassuringly advocated on the basis of this insight into the structure of the world and human nature.

The theoretical framework of this *sūtra*, however, did not necessiate any Tantric practices. There is a critical, unbridgeable gap between the Mahāyānic theoretical part of this scripture i.e. the first chapter, namely, the chapter of the progressing stages of the human mind (住心品) and the practical Tantric part i.e. all the following chapters.

At the time when Buddhism was declining at an accelerated pace, the reli-

gious ideal of the *Vairocanābhisaṁbodhi-sūtra*, which in its essential part rests on the plane of Mahāyāna Buddhism having as its goal the remote attainment of enlightenment through the accumulation of the two kinds of necessary merits over the unimaginably long period of the three great uncountable aeons (三大阿僧祇刧), had come to be regarded as too remote and too sluggish for the people of the time. Such people, being urged by vague but impending feeling of the crisis of their own civilization, were looking impatiently for a method and theory of quick attainment of enlightenment (即身成佛). In order to discover the logic of quick attainment of enlightenment, it was necessary for them to cross over to the slope of Tantrism by overcoming the Mahāyānic aspect of the theoretical system of the *Vairocanābhisaṁbodhi-sūtra*.

Conversely, in the *Tattvasaṁgraha-tantra*, the rationalistic wall of Mahāyāna Buddhism having been overcome, "the truth of all the *tathāgatas*", or the secret of the universe, was revealed to all people, and the method of quick attainment of enlightenment, as far as the Tantric mode of thinking goes, was presented to them in completeness. However, this was made possible only by destroying the Mahȧyānic framework of the theory and discarding the lofty ideal of the *Vairocanābhisaṁbodhi-sūtra*.

On the slope of Tantrism, one is necessarily a solitary *yogin* confronting the ultimate reality by himself. For him the outer world or the existence of others is of no meaning. For him capabilities, ethical or religious efforts and even the friendliness and mercy toward others (慈悲), the essential virtue of Mahāyāna Buddhism, are not necessary.

Such logical extremism, however, causes a basic feeling of uncertainty as to the efficacy of the very logic of *yoga* in those who are still not free from the Mahāyāna Buddhistic consciousness, not allowing them to rest easily on the plane of Tantrism.

We may safely say that the *Vairocanābhisaṁbodhi-sūtra*, essentially being Mahāyānic, was not yet complete as a system of Tantrism, and that the *Tattvasaṁgraha-tantra* as a completed Tantric system ceased to be Mahāyānic.

ii. Kūkai, the herald of the 'critical' or precarious character of the Tantric Buddhism

In the Japanese world of the *Shingon* sect (眞言宗, it has been assumed traditionally that these two systems, *viz.* the system of the *Vairocanābhisaṁbodhi-sūtra* and that of the *Tattvasaṁgraha-tantra*, together constituting the authentic esoteric Buddhism (純粋密教) are not different in their ability to bring about enlightenment quickly, and that they bring people to one and the same truth. In reality, however, the Mahāyänic logic of accumulating merits found in the *Vairocanābhisaṁbodhi-sūtra* and the mystical, Upanisadic logic of *yoga* advocated in the *Tattvasaṁgraha-tantra* are completley antithetical and can not be synthesized. In my opinion, the only figure who has noticed the 'critical' or precarious character of Tantric Buddhism is Kūkai (空海), posthumously named

Kōbō-daishi (弘法大師, the great master Kōbō 774–835 A.D.), the founder of the Japanese sect of *Shingon Buddhism* (眞言宗).

In the concluding part of the *Un-ji-gi* (『吽字義』, "The Meaning of the Character *Hūṁ*"), the last work of his life, Kūkai states:

> "Moreover, I will explain the fact that this single character (*Hūṁ*) includes all the truths (理) expounded in all the scriptures and treatises. Whatsoever is expounded in the *Mahāvairocana-sūtra* and the *Tattvasaṁgraha-tantra* is nothing more than 'the three phrases' (三句); *viz.* '(of *sarvajñajñāna, viz.* the omniscience 一切智智) the human mind seeking for enlightenment (*bodhicitta* 菩提心) is the cause; the great compassion (*mahākaruṇā* 大悲) (of Vairocana Tathāgata) is the root; and (employing) practical means (*upāya* 方便) (to save all the living beings of the world) is the final aim (*paryavasāna* 究竟)'.
>
> If we summarize the diffusive to the concise, and the derivative to the original, all the doctrines can be brought back to these three phrases; and these three phrases can be condensed to the single character *Hūṁ*. Even if (these doctrines are) diffused, (they are) not confused; even if (they are) condensed, none of them is left behind. This is possible because of the unthinkable talent of the *tathāgatas* and the natural efficacy of the truth itself. (Truths expounded) in tens of thousands of scriptures and treatises do not go beyond these three phrases".[3]

As will be explained later, 'the three phrases' thoroughly represent the idea of the *Vairocanābhisaṁbodhi-sūtra*, but not that of the *Tattvasaṁgrahatantra*; and it goes without saying that Kūkai was well aware of this fact. I am convinced that Kūkai clearly noticing that the ridge composed by the two slopes of these 'two great scriptures' was too sharp for one to balance onself upon, kept himself consciously on the side of the *Vairocanābhisaṁbodhi-sūtra*. He must have intentionally mentioned both the *Tattvasaṁgraha-tantra* and the *Vairocanābhisabodhi-sūtra* to remind us that the ideal of 'the three phrases' is to be retained by one who, keeping himself on the humane slope of Mahāyāna Buddhism, can command a view of the tempting, but dangerous slope of Tantrism yet to be synthesized with Mahāyāna Buddhism. I imagine, it must have been an unfinished dream of Kūkai to establish an ideal Tantric Buddhism precisely on the soaring ridge of the two greatest scriptures by harmonizing the noble humanism of the *Vairocanābhisaṁbodhi-sūtra* with the dazzlingly miraculous secret of the quick attainment of enlightenment advocated within the *Tattvasaṁgraha-tantra*.

iii. Tantrism subsequent to the **Tattvasaṁgraha-tantra**

In the *Tattvasaṁgraha-tantra*, the secret of the quick attainment of enlightenment was actually revealed. There, the Mahāyānic ideal of strenuous effort (難行), the idea of the accumulation of the two kinds of merits (二資糧の積集)

over the long period of the three great uncountable aeons (三大阿僧祇劫) proposed by the *Vairocanābhisaṁbodhi-sūtra* was surpassed, and the Tantric ideal of the quick attainment of enlightenment through the easy practice (易行) of *yoga* was declared on the basis of a clear methodical consciousness.

The antithetical character of the two scriptures requires their followers to assume the two contrastive attitudes. A Mahāyānic practiser of the *Vairocanābhisaṁbodhi-sūtra* is essentially a pilgrim who, following the example of Sudhanaśreṣṭhidāraka (善財童子) of the *Gaṇḍavyūha-sūtra* (華嚴經入法界品), being urged by the compassion to others, courses in the world for the sake of realizing the lofty ideal of saving all living beings. Conversely, the practiser of the *Tattvasaṁgraha-tantra* is a meditator who sits solitarily without taking any interest in others.

This character of the two is reflected also in the contrastive forms of their *maṇḍalas*. The *maṇḍala* of the *Vairocanābhisaṁbodhi-sūtra* can be represented in concentric circles, the centre of which is the brightest; each successive circle becoming darker. On the contrary, the *maṇḍala* of the *Tattvasaṁgraha-tantra* is a plain white circle, in clear contrast with the outer darkness, containing no difference of brightness within.

After the Tantric logic of *yoga* was proclaimed in the *Tattvasaṁgraha-tantra*, followers of all systems of Tantric Buddhism should have become sitting meditators, the *maṇḍala* of those systems being of same type as that of the *Tattvasaingraha-tantra*. As the universal formula of attaining enlightenment, together with an example and its mode of operation were presented in the *Tattvasaṁgraha-tantra* the practicers should have been able to attain enlightenment merely by applying the formula exactly as it was applied in the *Tattvasaṁgraha-tantra* itself. Then, did they actually attain enlightenment? To this question, the general image of Tantric Buddhism of the stage subsequent to the *Tattvasaṁgraha-tantra* offers a negative answer.

The formula itself found within the *Tattvasaṁgraha-tantra* must have been right; but it left too many elements yet to be clarified when one tries to apply it practically. In the time of *tantras* subsequent to the *Tattvasaṁgraha-tantra*, such as the *Guhyasamāja-tantra*[4] and the *Sarvabuddhasamāyoga-ḍākinīmāyāsaṁvara-tantra*,[5] many attempts were made unsuccessfully to solve problems by applying the formula. The formula was presented in the last step of the so-called five-stepped process of attaining enlightenment (*pañcākārābhisaṁbodhi-krama* 五相成身觀) as follows:

> "*Yathā sarvatathāgatās tathāhaṁ*"[6]
> (As all the *tathāgatas* are, so am I.)

This was interpreted by the tantrists of the time as follows:

> 'If the individual existence and the ultimate reality are homologous, they are identical.'

or,

> 'If the individual existence successfully reorganizes itself to be homologous with the ultimate reality, the former can unite itself with the latter.'

According to this interpretation, some tried to pick up the elements common to both the individual existence and the ultimate reality, from the multiform structures of both, so as to reconstruct the structure of the former homologous with that of the latter. Others combined the homogeneity of the two as a new condition which was hoped to increase the certainty of the efficacy of the formula. These efforts, however, drove them ironically into a pitfall i.e. the idea of the so-called *Sahaja-yāna* (俱生乘) which claims that we are by birth (*sahaja* 俱生) enlightened. Here, they no longer needed Tantric practice to reconstruct themselves in a form homologous with the ultimate reality, since they were already endowed with the structural similarity, and consequently were already in unity with it.

As far as the Tantric logic of *yoga* is concerned, it is difficult to reject this idea of *sahaja*, and at the same time, it is also undeniable that the Tantric mentality of *sahaja* is nothing other than the state which undermines Tantrism itself. Thus, in the system of *sahaja*, the Tantric logic of the quick attainment of enlightenment resulted in denying the Tantric practice of attaining enlightenment.

The lack of religious substantiality within this system of *sahaja* caused anxiety in its believers. The anxiety was not overcome before they established a revolutionarily new religion, that is, the religion of the *Hevajra-tantra*[7] on the basis of the seemingly abominable, heretical cult of cemetery (*śmaśāna* 尸林).

iv. The cult of cemetery

What I call 'the cult of cemetery' is a diabolical cult of Bhairava, a demonic form of the Great God Śiva, and his consort which was prevalent among the lowest strata of the rural, matriarchal community of the time. It is thought to have been a cult usually performed in a cemetery (*śmaśāna*) by secret societies of lower class women of rural communities who were regarded as or called themselves *yoginīs* or *ḍāhinīs*.

These women assembled in a circle (*yoginī-cakra* or *ḍāhinī-jāla*) within a cemetery (*śmaśāna*) at midnight on a certain day of the month and celebrated orgies drinking liquor and eating meat. They sacrificed in orgies, even human sacrifice on occasion, to Bhairava for the sake of attaining magical power. They assumed the role of the consort of Bhairava i.e. Durgā, who is referred to by other names such as Kālī, Cāmuṇḍā, Kālarātri, Śyāmā and so on as the occasion demands, and practised sexual yogic practices surrounding the male object of the practice (*yogin or ḍāka*) i.e. the hero (*vīra*), who assumed the role of the lord Bhairava, both experiencing unusual, supreme pleasures.

These women were regarded with great aversion and horror by outsiders because of the abominable aspect of their cult based on all the hideous and repulsive elements of the cemetery. At the same time, however, they were awed and revered because of their marvelous attainment of magical power (*siddhi* 悉地) and their unusual ecstacy which could only be realized in an exclusive society.

In the course of time, their sexual yogic practices were systematized to present a general idea of the physical structure of three veins (*nāḍī*) and six nerve centres (*cakra*) within the body, and accordingly, the certainty and universality of the sexual pleasure which was realized through these practices was increased. It was at this stage that a group of Tantric Buddhists, noticing the mental and physiological certainty of the effect of the sexual yogic practices of these *yoginīs*, adopted this cult of cemetery so as to utilize the concrete basis of the cult in order to attain a solid answer to the anxiety caused by the formula of the quick attainment of enlightenment presented in the *Tattvasaṁgraha-tantra*.

At that time, the male objects (*yogin*) of the sexual practices of these women, who were fundamentally non-clerical and territorial, were the somewhat more professional and migratory practicers of *yoga*, affiliated with the lower sects of Śaivism such as Kāpālikas or Kālāmukhas.

The Buddhist immigrants to the cult of cemetery tried to take the place of these Śaivaite *yogins* leaving the basic structure of the cult, that is, the group of *yoginīs* (*yoginī-cakra*) untouched. Preserving almost all the elements of Bhairava, the god of *śmaśāna*, adding only trivial elements, they created a new, demonic God Heruka, alias Hevajra, who stands trampling his own father Bhairava under foot assuming almost an identical form.

v. The **Hevajra-tantra,** *Buddhism of the cemetery*

Originally, eight *yoginīs* formed a group and practised sexual *yoga* in rotation surrounding a male object (*yogin*). This phenomenon is alluded to by the word *sañcāra* (translocation).[8] To this original group of eight *yoginīs*, Buddhist immigrants introduced, with a clear methodological consciousness, the group of five *yoginīs* to form a new living *maṇḍala*. In the *maṇḍala* of the *Hevajra-tantra*, the original group of eight *yoginīs* was pushed away to the outer circle (*bāhyapuṭa* 外院) of the *maṇḍala* and excluded from the sexual *yoga* with the Lord Hevajra.[9]

In the *Hevajra-tantra*, the five *yoginīs* who compose the newly introduced group are regarded as nothing other than the five families of *tathāgatas* which composed the *Vajradhātu-maṇḍala* (the *maṇḍala* of the adamantine sphere 金剛界曼荼羅), the ultimate reality of the *Tattvasaṁgraha-tantra*. Here, the wild lower caste women of the time, who used to assemble in a cemetery at midnight and indulge themselves in witchcraft and sexual practices in the orgie, were reorganized to form a new matrix in which the quick attainment of enlightenment was expected to be realized. Thus, the universal formula which had been

advocated ideally in the *Tattvasaṁgraha-tantra* was tentatively realized through sexual practice with the *yoginīs* who actually existed at the time.

vi. The 'critical' or precarious character of **Saṁvara** *Tantrism*

According to the Tantric way of thinking, the formula of the quick attainment of enlightenment was thus brought into practice successfully by incorporating the practical cogency of the cult of *śmaśāna*. The ultimate truth should have been realized through the sexual *yoga* practised in the group of *yoginīs* (*yoginī-cakra*); there should have been nothing left to be done. Nevertheless, they dared go beyond it.

These Tantrīsts of *śmaśāna* were still at least half Buddhist; and this self-consciousness of Mahāyānic Buddhists prevented them from staying exclusively on the slope of Tantrism. To the truth practically realized, they added, according to their own original system of consecration (*abhiṣeka* 灌頂), a fourth consecration (*caturthābhiṣeka*) of the *Hevajra-tantra*, an aphorismic truth which would seem unnecessary from the Tantric view of the truth. Consequently, they were in need of substantiating this aphorismic truth. However, the Tantric method was not applicable to this purpose. At this time, they reached a stage in which they had to judge the truth or falsehood of the Tantric logic of *yoga* itself on a basis other than that of Tantric practice.

They had no choice but to have recourse to the difficult practice (難行) to substantiate the logic of the easy attainment of the ultimate truth (易行). Actually, they tried to substantiate the logic of meditation by the antithetical practice of pilgimage in the stage of the *Saṁvarodaya-tantra*[10] subsequent to the *Hevajra-tantra*.

During the short lapse of time between the *Hevajra-tantra* and the *Saṁvarodaya-tantra*, the earliest of the *Saṁvara* literature, the system of twenty-four *pīṭhas* of ten classes was very quickly organized. The followers of the *Saṁvara* Tantrism actually pilgrimaged, at least in its early stage, to these *pīṭhas* located in various parts of the Indian subcontinent with the consciousness that they were advancing along the genuinely Mahāyānic process of the ten stages of the *bodhisattva* (*daśabhūmi* 菩薩十地) successively.

However, this system of external *pīṭhas* (*bāhyapīṭha*) was immediately reorganized through the Tantric logic of symbolization as an internal, physical system (*adhyātmapīṭha*) homologous with the system of external *pīṭhas*. Consequently, the internal system replaced the actual, difficult practice of making a pilgrimage and allowed practicers to attain the goal easily and quickly through a physical yogic practice.

From the point of view of the forms of *maṇḍalas*, the *maṇḍala* of the *Hevajra-tantra*, in its essential part, that is, the inner circle consisting of five *yoginīs* closely follows the form of the *maṇḍala* of the *Tattvasaṁgraha-tantra*; that is the plain white circle containing no differences of brightness within. This type of *maṇḍala* indicates the religion of sitting meditators (*yogin*), and in fact,

the follower of the *Hevajra-tantra* was fundamentally a meditator. However, as it had become obvious that the logic of *yoga*, or the logic of the religion of the meditators, could only be proved by the antithetical practice of pilgrimage, the sitting meditator of the *Hevajra-tantra* rose to his feet and went on a pilgrimage. Subsequently, the follower of the *Saṁvarodaya-tantra* came to be an alternating practicer of both pilgrimage and meditation. This fact is reflected in the form of the complete *Saṁvara-maṇḍala* of sixty-two deities, which is composed of two concentric parts: the inner circle of a meditator practising *yoga* with five *ḍākinīs* in rotation (*sañcāra*) and the outer twenty-four pilgrims coupled with their female partners.

The *Saṁvara-maṇḍala* of this form looks very similar to the *maṇḍala* of the *Vairocanābhisaṁbodhi-sūtra* which is also composed of two parts: the central circle of complete brightness, the sphere of those who have already attained the ideal, and the outer circle of those who are in the process of attaining the ideal increasing in brightness from the outer layers to the inner layers. In view of this then, were the two antithetical elements of Tantric Buddhism, *viz.* the Mahāyānic idea of accumulating merits through difficult practices and the Tantric logic of quickly uniting the individual with the ultimate reality through the easy practice of *yoga*, or the religion of walking pilgrims and the religion of sitting meditators, harmonized in the *Saṁvara* Tantrism? To this question, we are not able to give an affirmative answer.

It was not until the theory of the internal *pīṭhas* (*adhyātmapīṭha*) was completed in the *Vajraḍāka-tantra* that the twenty-four couples of *ḍākas* and *ḍākinīs* were introduced to the *maṇḍala* of the *Saṁvarodaya-tantra*. Until this point, the *maṇḍala* of the *Saṁvarodaya-tantra*, being very similar to the *maṇḍala* of the *Hevajra-tantra*, had not been able to reflect the pilgrimage aspect of its cult, which was later to be manifested in the outer circle of the *Saṁvara-maṇḍala* of sixty-two deīties. In the *Vajraḍāka-tantra*, each of twenty-four *ḍākinīs*, who are at the same time nothing other than veins (*nāḍi*) rest on each of twenty-four *pīṭhas*, the twenty-four parts composing a human body, are respectively coupled with their male partners. These twenty-four couples are then classified into three groups located in the sky, on the earth and under the earth, *viz.* the circle of mind (*citta-cakra*), the circle of speech (*vāk-cakra*) and the circle of body (*kāya-cakra*). These three totally constitute the substance of the ultimate reality.

Since the outer circle of the *Saṁvara-maṇḍala* is the result of the Tantric idea of the theory of the internal *pīṭhas* and is equipped with all the necessary conditions to guarantee the homology of the individual existence with the ultimate reality, it is sufficient unto itself as a basis of Tantric practice and allows one attain the ultimate truth easily and quickly just as the inner circle had done through an alternative method. Therefore, in spite of the fact that the *Saṁvara-maṇḍala* looks harmonious in its form, it involves an internal discrepancy between its inner and outer circles both of which can work independently of each other.

This internal discrepancy of the *Saṁvara-maṇḍala* indicates the 'critical' or

precarious character of Tantric Buddhism paradoxically exposed in the *Saṁvara* Tantrism. The *Saṁvara* Tantrism became precarious when it replaced improperly or too hastily the Mahāyānic practice of going on pilgrim to external *pīṭhas* (*bāhyapīṭha*) with the yogic practice of internal *pīṭhas* (*adhyātmapīṭha*). Both of the two antithetical elements of Tantric Buddhism, *viz.* Mahāyānic idea of accumulating merits and Tantric logic of *yoga* were indispensable for the dialectical development of Tantric Buddhism itself. Tantric Buddhism was destined to keep walking along the sharp ridge composed of these two elements being urged by a sense of crisis. Replacing the Mahāyānic practice of pilgrimage, which together with the Tantric practice of sexual *yoga* with the group of five *ḍākinīs* represented by the inner circle of the *Saṁvara-maṇḍala*, constitutes the *Saṁvara* Tantrism itself with another Tantric practice of internal *pīṭhas*, the *Saṁvara* Tantrism lost its own religious vitality caused by the consciousness of the 'crisis'.

In the following chapters of this article, I would like to substantiate the 'critical' or precarious character of Tantric Buddhism I have thus sketched out so as to have my image of Tantric Buddhism as 'critical' or precarious critically examined.

II. The world view of the *Vairocanābhisambodhi-sūtra*

i. The image of the world of Vairocana

An image of the world of the *tathāgata* Vairocana (毘盧遮那, 大日如來) in the *Vairocanābhisaṁbodhi-sūtra* can be constructed from the scene of the mystical drama at the introductory section of the first chapter of the *sūtra*. The Tibetan version of the *sūtra* states:

> "Thus have I heard at one time. The Reverend Lord (Vairocana) dwelt together with *vajradharas* (holders of adamantine wisdom, 持金剛) to be counted by the number of dusts of ten *buddha*-countries, such as 'Sky-spotless' *vajradhara* (虛空無垢執金剛), 'Walking-in-the-sky' *vajradhara* (虛空遊步執金剛), 'Appearing-from-the-sky' *vajradhara*, (虛空生執金剛, . . . and *Vajrapāṇi*, the chief of *gulujakas* (秘密主金剛手), in the vast, huge palace of the grand admantine sphere of the reality (大金剛法界宮) resided in by (all the) *tathāgatas*. This grand palace named 'King-jewel' had become visible as it had been imagined by *tathāgatas* as having neither a centre nor a boundary, and immense height, and being decorated very beautifully with king-jewels. He dwelt sitting on the lion-throne though he was assuming the appearance of a *bodhisattva*.
>
> He, being surrounded and faced by the people straining after enlightenment (*bodhisattva* 菩薩), the great people (*mahāsattva* 摩訶薩), such as Samantabhadra (普賢), Maitreya (彌勒), Mañjuśrī (文殊師利),

Sarvanivaraṇaviṣkambhin (除一切蓋障) etc., preached the truth of the teaching called 'the phrase of the sameness of body, speech and mind' after blessing (those people) as the 'sun-like *tathāgata*'.

Accordingly, those *bodhisattvas* such as Samantabhadra etc. and *vajradharas* headed by Vajrapāṇi entered into the storehouse of inexhaustible ornaments of the sameness of the body (身平等性無盡莊嚴藏) which was displayed to them though the blessing of the Lord Vairocana. They entered also into the storehouse of inexhaustible ornaments of the sameness of the speech and the sameness of the mind. They did not, however, imagine that they had entered into the body, the speech and the mind of the Lord Vairocana, nor did they imagine that they had come out of them.

They saw that all the bodily activities, all the oral activities and all the mental activities of the Lord Vairocana were preaching teachings broadly in all the spheres of living beings in all the places of the world by means of the words of the way of the secret *mantras* (秘密眞言道). They saw people having the same appearance as the *vajradharas* and *bodhisattvas* such as Samantabhadra, Padmapāṇi (蓮華手) etc, that is to say, the people who were preaching by means of the words of the way of the secret *mantras*, by means of completely purified words in ten directions, so as to have beings, who were in their (present) lives totally as a result of former deeds, live through the whole process of their lives, starting from the first birth of the (bodhi-) mind and lasting until the tenth stage (or *bodhisattvas*), and fulfil (their lives) by attaining this (tenth stage). They were preaching so as to have the lives of beings, whose lives of deeds (業壽) had been interrupted, bud out again."[11]

They, the *vajradharas* and *bodhisattvas*, entered into the *maṇḍala*, the world of the ultimate reality, and saw the *maṇḍala* itself. Vajrapāṇi expresses this state of being as follows:

"*Tathāgatas, arhats, samyaksaṁbuddhas*, having attained the omniscience (*sarvajñajñāna* 一切智智), display this omniscience perfectly to all the living beings."[12]

This remark shows the fact that, the *maṇḍala* is nothing but omniscience (*sarvajñajñāna*, literally, the knowledge of the omniscient), the totality of all the spiritual existences extending all over the world.

ii. Various aspects of the world of Vairocana

It is convenient to represent the *maṇḍala* of the *Vairocanābhisaṁbodhi-sūtra* as a figure with a large circle which represents the entire *maṇḍala* with a small circle in the centre of it. The former indicates theistically the *buddha* as the

ultimate reality (*dharmakāya* 法身, literally, the body of truth), and the latter the *buddha* enjoying the fruit of all the meritorious deeds he has accumulated (*saṁbhogakāya* 報身c, the body of enjoyment).

The first thing we notice in this long quotation from the introductory section of the *Vairocanābhisaṁbodhi-sūtra* is that, the whole *maṇḍala* and its centre are indicated with one and the same word "Vairocana". Here, we notice a tendency, if unconscious, common in every system of *maṇḍala*, to represent the whole *maṇḍala* and its centre as the same. This state of affairs must have been taken as a condition of enlightenment.

In the *Vairacanābhisaṁbodhi-sūtra*, this identity of the entirety and its centre occurs only when one successfully arrives at the centre of the *maṇḍala* after fulfilling all the necessary stages of the process of attaining enlightenment over the long period of 'the three great uncountable aeons' (三大阿僧祇劫). In the *Hevajra-tantra*, this condition of sameness is retained though in a reversed manner. In the case of the *Hevajra-tantra*, the whole *maṇḍala* is occupied by one and only deity Hevajra. Therefore, if one homologously imitates Hevajra through the sexual *yoga* with the group of five *yoginīs* (*yoginī-cakra*), representing the substance of the *maṇḍala*, he can become identical with the whole *maṇḍala* and can attain enlightenment in one moment.

Secondly, within this quotation, we notice the image of the double-layered world. Using the constituent words of the full title of the *Vairocanābhisaṁbodhi-sūtra*, *viz.* *Mahāvairocanābhisaṁbodhivikurvitādhiṣṭhānavaipulyasūtra-indrarājā nāma dharmaparyāya* (大毘盧遮那成佛神變加持經), the structure of the world is expressed as follows:

The world is composed of two strata: the world of natural existences (A) and the world of *vikurvaṇa* (神變) (A′) placed upon these natural existences (*adhiṣṭāna* 加持). *Vikurvaṇa* (神變), the miraculous transformation of all merits thus accumulated occurs at the critical moment of the *abhisaṁbodhi* (現等覺) of Vairocana. A and A′ meet within every individual existence which in itself constitutes the entire world in its capacity as a particle of it.

There, *bodhisattvas* such as *Samantabhadra* etc. (A) saw "the people of the same appearances" as Samantabhadra etc. (A′) acting for the benefit of the living being in the world. Each individual is called an "ornament" (莊嚴) as long as A and A′ are indivisibly united within him. Those great people such as Samantabhadra etc. well understand this state of being. This is indicated by the expression "they did not imagine that they had entered into the body, the speech and the mind of the Lord Vairocana, nor did they imagine that they had come out of them".

The world of Vairocana is composed of two currents flowing in opposite directions: one from the circumference to the centre and the other from the centre to the circumference. The former is the direction of wisdom (智慧) which realizes itself through the voluntary, subjective efforts of individuals to promote themselves toward the centre of the world, *viz.* enlightenment (*abhisaṁbodhi* 現等覺). Our minds are to be improved through our own efforts of incessantly

negating and overcoming each of the successive stages of our mind through the observation of essencelessness (*śūnyatā* 空性). This is the direction of self benefit (自利, *svārtha* or *svahita*) of improving the wisdom of enlightenment (*prajñā* 般若), which is the universal matrix of the ultimate reality and is at the same time innate within us.

The latter is the direction of the universal compassion (慈悲) emanating from the centre of the world. This universal compassion is reflected within our individual minds and is realized by our personal exertions (*upāya* 方便) for the benefit of others (利他, *parārtha* or *parahita*).

The current from the circumference to the centre is nothing but the stratum A′ and the current opposite to this is the stratum A′ abovementioned. *Prajñā* (般若), the wisdom for self benefit (自利), and *upāya* (方便), the actual exertion for the benefit of others (利他) through compassion (慈悲) meet within each of us who make up the world of Vairocana. In other words, we can become the component parts of the world of Vairocana only on the condition that these two elements i.e. *prajñā* and *upāya* are indivisibly united in our individual existence to form our minds directing toward enlightenment (*bodhicitta* 菩提心). Here is presented the most fundamental axiom:

'*prajñā* plus *upāya* is *bodhicitta*'.

This was the essential axiom through the course of the development of Tantric ideas. Tantric Buddhists interpreted literally the metaphor prevalent in Mahāyāna Buddhism, which compares *prajñā* to the mother and *upāya* to the father of a *buddha*. They represented the innate *bodhicitta* with the mixture of menstrual fluid and semen which is originated through the sexual union of the mother (*prajñā*) and the father (*upāya*).

They should have been able to attain enlightenment easily and quickly only by making the symbolized *bodhicitta* (the mixture of menstrual fluid and semen) ascend through the spinal vein (*nāḍī*) of their bodies i.e. *Avadhūtī* to the topmost nerve centre (*cakra*) thought to be situated on the uppermost part of the head. So far as the Tantric logic is concerned, because that which is to be symbolized and the symbol itself are one and the same, when the symbolized *bodhicitta* attains to the topmost *cakra* of great pleasure (*Mahāsukha-cakra*), having been promoted through the symbolized process of attaining enlightenment, that is, the vein *Avadhūtī*, enlightenment should be realized thereupon.

Here, we notice the critical turn which divides Tantrism from Mahāyāna Buddhism. At the moment when they replaced *upāya* (方便), direct exertions based on compassion (慈悲), with another symbol such as semen, they passed over the ridge to the slope of Tantrism. For a follower of the *Vairocanābhisaṁbodhi-sūtra*, it was inconceivable at all to symbolize *upāya*, manipulate it through physical or sexual yogic practice and consequently dissolve the basic principle of Mahāyāna Buddhism.

Thirdly, in this long quotation from the *Vairocanābhisaṁbodhi-sūtra*, we find

the Mahāyānic ideal of life, which is completely antithetical to the Tantric ideal of the quick attainment of enlightenment. The Mahāyānic ideal regards human life as the entire process of the current flowing from the circumference to the centre of the world of Vairocana. The image of a human being in the *Vairocanābhisaṁbodhi-sūtra* is that of a pilgrim who continues walking this nearly endless course of life steadily und untiringly.

In Mahāyāna Buddhism, in order to fulfil the entire process of attaining enlightenment, the unimaginably long period of the three great uncountable aeons (三大阿僧祇劫) is thought to be needed. On the other hand, Tantrism advocated a revolutionally new ideal of attaining enlightenment quickly on the basis of the logic of *yoga*. In the *Vairocanābhisaṁbodhi-sūtra*, however, which has been taken as one of the two Fundamental scriptures of Tantric Buddhism, the ideal of quick attainment of enlightenment is denied for the very reason that the structure of the world and human existence require a gradual process of attainment.

In the latter portion of the first chapter, the chapter of the progressing stages of mind (住心品) of the Chinese translation of the text, a section called the process of promoting the grades of mind (心品轉昇次第) describes the state of mind which has already been completely purified through the effort over the unimaginably long period as follows:

> "Within the *bodhisattvas* who practise the practice of *bodhisattvas* through the way of secret *mantras* (秘密眞言道) and who have already accumulated infinite materials of both meritorious deeds (福德) and knowledge (智慧) for an unimaginably long period of hundreds of thousands of millions of innumerable aeons, occurs the completely characterless mind (極無自性心), which is accompanied by infinite wisdom (*prajñā*) and means (*upāya*). ...... O the chief of *guhyakas*, this is nothing but the mind of enlightenment of the first stage (of *bodhisattvas*) (初地菩提心)".

Here, it is clearly advocated that, in order to reach to the inner circle of the *maṇḍala* of the *Vairocanābhisaṁbodhi-sūtra*, along with the improvement of wisdom, the accumulation of the material of meritorious deeds (*puṇyasaṁbhāra* 福德資糧) is indispensable. *Puṇyasambhāra* is the result of all the direct exertions for the benefit of others performed because of compassion (慈悲). These exertions are impressed and stored in one's mind, just like a kind of energy, constituting the necessary materials for the attainment of enlightenment. As long as one needs this *puṇyasaṁbhāra*, which is produced through one's actions (*harman* 業) for the benefit of others, he can not jump over the stages of the improvement of mind as is done in Tantrism.

The word "lives of deeds" (業壽) refers to the chain of action (*karman* 業) formerly done and its fruit, that is, afflictive existence (壽) in the world.

In Hīnayāna Buddhism, bringing oneself to the absolute nothingness of

nirvāṇa (涅槃) through abstaining from action, thus severing the chain of action and its results which have been in existence since the beginningless past was the ideal. In Tantrism, however, action and its results have ceased to be the issue. For a Tantrist, who is essentially a solitary *yogin* sitting in meditation directly facing the ultimate reality by himself, the existence of others is of no meaning. For him, no compassion toward others and no exertions for the benefit of others based of compassion are necessary.

On the other hand, in the *Vairocanābhisaṁbodhi-sūtra* quoted at the beginning of this chapter, it is clearly stated that the ideal is not to sever the chain of action and its results, but to complete the chain itself. It naturally follows that everyone is responsible for the continued existence of the world of Vairocana. The compassion of Vairocana works so as to have each one of them live their lives completely through the entire process which seems practically endless. Correspondingly, each person has as the duty of his life to live so as to have Vairocana continue to exist. The world of reality, the omniscience (*sarvajña-jñāna* (一切智智), or Vairocana as the ultimate reality (*dharmakāya* 法身) continues to exist for its own sake, simply because its existence itself is good.

iii. Conditions for the existence of the world of Vairocana

As is natural to a Mahāyānic way of thinking, this world of Vairocana is thought to exist not as an objective, solid substance, but as an essenceless (*śūnya* 空), conditional existence (縁生). It exists as long as certain necessary conditions are complete.

Vajrapāṇi, who has seen the world of Vairocana and recognized it to be the self-development of the universal wisdom (*sarvajñajñāna* 一切智智) (see p. 178), compares it to the five gross elements, *viz.* ether, earth, fire, wind and water (*pañcamahābhūta* 五大). Subsequently, he asks the Reverend Lord Vairocana the conditions which keep the universal wisdom, which is nothing other than the world of Vairocana, existent:

> "... O Reverend Lord, metaphorically speaking, the element of water makes the bodies of all living beings comfortable. Likewise, the wisdom of the omniscient (*sarvajñajñāna* 一切智智) makes the world accompanied with the celestials comfortable. In that case, what is the cause (因)? What is the root (根)? And what is the final aim (究竟) of this wisdom?"[14]

The answer to this question is contained in what has been referred to as 'the three phrases' (三句) (see p. 169).

> "O Vajrapāṇil Well done! Well done! You cleverly asked me those questions. Listen and remember rightly and completely what I will tell you. The cause is the mind seeking for enlightenment (*bodhicitta*

> 菩提心); the root is the compassion (*karuṇā* 悲); and the final aim (*paryavasāna* 究竟) is means (practically employed for the benefit of others) (*upāya* 方便).[15]
>
> O the chief of *guhyakas!* What is the enlightenment then? It is to know our own mind truly and thoroughly; and (what is attained therethrough) is nothing but the highest, the right and the complete enlightenment (*anuttarasamyaksaṁbodhi* 無上正等覺)."[16]

Herein lies another maxim which together with 'the three phrases' has been traditionally taken as the most essential teaching of the system of the *Vairocanābhisaṁbodhi-sūtra, viz.* 'recognize your own mind truly and thoroughly' (如実知自心). Subsequently, Vajrapāṇi asks another supplementary question:

> "O Reverend Lord! From what position should the state of the omniscient (*sarvajñatā* 一切智性) be sought after? Through what should the enlightenment be attained definitely and perfectly?"[17]
>
> The Lord Vairocana answers:
>
> "The enlightenment (菩提) and the state of the omniscient (一切智性) are to be sought after from one's own mind; the mind is (as its very bottom the universal mind which has been) completely purified by nature (from the first). (本性清淨, Tib. *raṅ bshin gyis yoṅs su dag pa, svabhāvapariśuddha* or *prakṛtipariśuddha*?)."[18]

These questions and answers clearly indicate the Mahāyānic idea of the relation between the ultimate reality and the individual existence. The universal, ultimate reality owes the conditions of its existence and its continuation to the intellectual and practical effort of an individual existence. The universal wisdom (*sarvajñajñāna*), which is nothing but the ultimate reality or the *maṇḍala* of Vairocana is to be realized through the personal effort of penetrating one's own mind to its very bottom. At this point, the individual and the universal are unified as one and the same thing. In the system of the *Vairocanābhisaṁbodhi-sūtra*, the unity or *yoga* of the individual existence with the ultimate reality, which is nothing other than the religious ideal of Tantric Buddhism, occurs only at the ver, bottom of human mind, or in other words, the place where the enlightenment is actually realized (*bodhimaṇḍa* 菩提道場), which is figuratively the centre of the *maṇḍala*.

This fact exactly corresponds with the statement that "the whole *maṇḍala* and its centre are indicated with one and the same word i.e. Vairocana (see p. 179).

The world of Vairocana is to be depicted as a circle the radius of which represents the entire process of the progress of the human mind toward enlightenment. While within this circle, one ought to continue walking as a pilgrim on the destined course toward the centre, Vairocana. One continues walking voluntarily harmonizing within himself *bodhicitta*,[19] the mind aiming toward enlightenment

with *karuṇā*, the universal compassion of Vairocana reflected upon him, so as to realize the final aim (*paryavasāna* 究竟) of saving all living beings through practical means (*upāya* 方便). This aim is to be realized only when he attains enlightenment (*abhisaṁbodhi* 現等覺).

The religious ideal of the *Vairocanābhisaṁbodhi-sūtra* is placed in the far future beyond the three great uncountable aeons (三大阿僧祇劫); but, as long as one continues walking on the way toward the ideal, one is walking within the ideal itself.

iv. The theory of one hundred and sixty monadic minds

As can be expected from the remark in the previous section (see p. 183) that "the enlightenment and the state of the omniscient are to be sought after from one's own mind" the structure of the world is determined by that of the individual existence. Tha latter should also serve as a basis of morals helping people to decide their practical behaviour in the world. The structure of the individual existence, which we will refer to as 'the theory of one hundred and sixty minds' may well be regarded as the most important problem of the whole theoretical system of the *Vairocanābhisaṁbodhi-sūtra*.

The Chinese title of the first chapter of the *Vairocanābhisaṁbodhi-sūtra*, *viz.* 住心品 literally means "the chapter of the various stages of human mind". Kōbō-daishi Kūkai (弘法大師空海), the founder of the *Shingon*-sect of Japanese Esoteric Buddhism, taking the word 住心 literally as referring to the process of promoting the grades of mind (心品轉昇の次第) (see p. 15), established his fundamental system of 'the ten progressive stages of mind' (十住心の教判). According to this system, the process of the promotion of mind mentioned in the *sūtra* is divided into ten stages from the first, *viz.* 'the mind of people (in the natural state) as foolish as goats or sheeps' (異生羝羊心) to the tenth, *viz.* 'the mind (constituting the world of Vairocana) as a secret ornament (of it)' (秘密莊嚴心). He applied each of the extant sects of Buddhism and even Confucianism and Taoism to these ten stages, and thus established successfully a complete system which presents to us the magnificent, harmonious image of the world of Vairocana. On the uppermost layer of this world is situated the Esoteric Buddhism of the *Shingon*-sect (九顯一密), and at the same time, all the layers are included within the field of Esoteric Buddhism (九顯十密).

As Kūkai's systematization is so complete and his influence so decisive, it has never been doubted that the word 住心 means the progressive stages of the human mind or that it refers to the process of promoting the grades of mind (心品轉昇の次第). This fact, however, does not necessarily mean that the only possible interpretation of the word 住心 is as the vertical, progressing stages of human mind. In fact, we do not even find this word in the text of the first chapter of the *Vairocanābhisaṁbodhi-sūtra* itself, which is the context in which one should interpret the meaning of the title of the chapter 住心品.

Now, if we enlarge our scope to the Tibetan version of the text and the

commentaries[20] of Buddhaguhya (c. 800 A.D.), we find another possible way of interpreting the word 住心 which enables us to reconstruct the structure of the individual existence, on the basis of which we can describe the structure of the world precisely, and at the same time determine our practical behaviour logically. Actually, 住心品 means 'the chapter of one hundred and sixty minds'.

In the Tibetan version, the title of the first chapter is "*sems kyi khyad par rim par phye ba*" (Skt. *cittaviśeṣa-paṭala*?) which means 'the chapter of various minds' or 'the chapter of distinctions of mind' (心差別品). On the other hand, the *Unrevised Longer Commentary* of Buddhaguhya gives the title "*sems kyi rgyud rim par phye ba* (Skt. *cittasaṁtānapaṭala* or *cittasamtatipaṭala*?) which means 'the chapter of the continuation of mind' or 'the chapter of minds as continuations' (心相續品). As it is our fundamental premise that these two words, *viz. sems kyi khyad par* and *sems kyi rgyud* should indicate one and the same thing, even if it is difficult to find a Sanskrit equivalent common to these two Tibetan words, we can easily determine the passage which indicates the meaning of the chapter by comparing the quotations from the *Unrevised Longer Commentary* of Buddhaguhya, which cover the *sūtra* nearly completely, with the Tibetan version of the *sūtra*, and locating the place where these two words, *viz. sems hyi rgyud* of Buddhaguhya's commentary and *sems hyi khyad par* of the Tibetan version of the *sūtra* correspond. These two words correspond in only one paragraph, which enumerates and explains each of the sixty experiential minds actually occurring in our minds.

To Vajrapāṇī's question abovementioned (see p. 183), the Lord Vairocana answers that "the enlightenment and the state of the omniscient are to be sought after from one's own mind" and subsequently describes the state of mind which is at the very bottom of our mind and is nothing other than the enlightenment itself. This state of mind is called 'the mind of enlightenment of the first stages of the *bodhisattvas'* (初地菩提心), or 'the first course of the realm where the truth is realized' 初法明道). Subsequently, Vajrapāṇi asks the Lord questions as follows:

"O Reverend Lord! How does the mind of enlightenment arise?
How shall I look for the characteristics of this mind (thus) arisen from which the enlightenment occurs?
O the most excellent of the people who know this mind!
O the great hero who has arisen from the wisdom!
Tell me, after overcoming how many minds does this mind arise?
O the protector! Tell me broadly the aspects of minds and the time (to be spent to overcome these minds).
O great saint! How are the merits of these (minds)?
How are the practices (to be practised in each of the stages) of these (minds)?
Tell me the distinctions of each (of these) minds."[21]

The Lord answers:

> "Well done! My son!
> The aspect of the continuation of mind, which is the highest stage of the Great Vehicle,
> is the most excellent of the secrets of the perfectly enlightened ones.
> It can not be known by any of the people who thinks of things logically.
> Concentrate your mind and listen to me. I will tell you the whole truth".[22]

Thus, the Lord Vairocana begins to relate the whole process of the progressing grades of minds (心品轉昇の次第). In the beginning, Vairocana mentions the eight stages of mundane minds (世間八心) in which the real existence of *ātman* is upheld. Subsequently after these eight, so to speak, 'vertical' mundane minds, the sixty, so to speak, 'horizontal' mundane minds out of a total of one hundred and sixty minds are enumerated.

Vajrapāṇi asks a question, in which the two words abovementioned, *viz. sems kyi khyad par* and *sems kyi rgyud*, correspond.

> *bcom ldan ḥdas sems kyi khyad par de dag bśad du gsol*[23]
> "O Reverend Lord! Tell me those various minds!"

The Unrevised Longer Commentary of Buddhaguhya gives following quotation:

> *bcom ldan ḥdas sems kyi rgyud de dag bśad du gsol*[24]
> "O Reverend Lord! Tell me those minds as continuations!"

The Lord answers to this question and enumerates sixty minds:

> "O the chief of *guhyakas*! Listen to the characteristics of various minds. O the chief of *guhyakas*! Those minds are: the mind of desire (貪心), the mind without desire (無貪心), the mind of wrath (瞋心), the mind of friendliness (慈心), the mind of foolishness (癡心), ...
> . . . . . .
> What is the mind of desire then? It is (the mind) of a person who has desire coming into contact with an object. What is the mind without desire? It is (the mind of) a person who is free from desire coming into contact with an object. What is the mind of wrath? It is (the mind of a person) who has wrath coming into contact with an object. What is the mind of friendliness? It is (the mind of) a person who has friendliness coming into contact with an object. What is the mind of foolishness?

It is (the mind of a person) coming into contact with an object without consideration. . . . . . .

. . . . . .

O the chief of *guhyakasl* When one expends three aeons (*kalpa* 劫), one overcomes one hundred and sixty minds, which is obtained by once, twice, three times, four times and five times multiplying by two, the supermundane mind occurs within him. That is to say:

> As this (world) is nothing but (the aggregate of) the *skandhas* (蘊), *ātman* (我) does not exist at all.
> This world is to be abandoned as it is of no use, because it is nothing more than the object of senses.
> . . . . . ."[25]

It is of course tenable to assume that those one hundred and sixty minds are mundane and occur' only once at the last stage of the eight mundane minds (世間八心). However, inasmuch as we must recognize the fact that these one hundred and sixty minds are of such importance that they are referred to by the title of the first chapter of the *Vairocanābhisaṁbodhi-sūtra* and occupy as much as one quarter of the whole chapter, we can not merely be contented with the hitherto accepted interpretation.

We would like to reconstruct the structure of human mind on the two co-ordinates, *viz.* the ordinate of the vertical process of progressive grades of mind (心品轉昇の次第) and the abscissa of the horizontal one hundred and sixty minds.

From this point of view, we notice that Vajrapāṇi's questions refer to nothing other than this total structure of human mind to be understood in both vertical and horizontal terms. When he asked "the characteristics of the mind (thus) arisen" (*sems shyes paḥi mtshan ñid*), he was referring to the mind of a *bodhisattva* who has entered into the first stage of the *bodhisattvas* (初地), which is the ideal state described in the answer of the Lord as "the highest stage of the Great Vehicle" (*theg pa chen poḥi go ḥphan mchog* 大乘最勝位). This "highest" mind on the vertical scale is also composed of one hundred and sixty horizontal minds such as "the mind of desire" (貪心) and so on.

We assume that this was the original interpretation of the structure of mind within the *Vairocanābhisaṁbodhi-sūtra*. However, we only occasionally get a glimpse of it in an exceptional remark appearing in the commentators, *viz.* Śubhakarasiṁha (善無畏, died 735 A.D.) and Buddhaguhya, both of them took the one hundred and sixty minds only as mundane. The only example we can find in Buddhaguhya's commentary is as follows:

> *sems hyi dṅos po drug cu rnams las brgya drug cur ḥphel ba yaṅ sgrib paḥi cha phra rags gsum du phye sle gsum po de rnams re re shiṅ yaṅ gsum gsum du phye bas rnam pa dgur bltaḥo // de la sgirb pa chen*

poḥi chen po la sems gcig spoṅ la chen poḥi ḥbriṅ po la ni gñis spoṅ / chen poḥi chuṅ ṅu la gsum spoṅ / ḥbriṅ gi chen po la bshi spoṅ / ḥbriṅ gi ḥbriṅ la ni lṅa spoṅ / ḥbriṅ gi chuṅ ṅu la ni drug spoṅ / chuṅ ṅuḥi chen po la bdun spoṅ / chuṅ ṅuḥi ḥbriṅ la brgyad spoṅ / ḥog nas ḥbyuṅ baḥi tshul gyis de ltar sems brgya drug cu mos pas spyod paḥi sa nas sbyaṅ shiṅ mos pas spyod paḥi sa de rdsogs par byed do // de la dgu po rnams kyi tha ma chuṅ ṅuḥi yaṅ chuṅ ṅu ni mos pas spyod paḥi sa nas ḥphar nas spoṅ ste / ye śes hyi sa la ḥjug par śes par byaḥo //[15]

"Even when we increase the (number of) substantial minds from sixty to one hundred and sixty, they are thought to be classified into nine as we divide the degrees of the obstruction (of these minds) into three in accordance with its grossness and minuteness and again subdivide each of these three classes into three.

When the obstruction (of the one hundred and sixty horizontal minds) is (to be classed as) the gross of the gross, (the mind of) the first (stage of the vertical process of progressing grades of the mind) abandons (these one hundred and sixty minds). When (the obstruction is) the medium of the gross, the second (mind) abandons (the one hundred and sixty horizontal minds corresponding to it). When (the obstruction is) the minute of the gross, the third abandons. When the gross of the medium, the fourth abandons. When the medium of the medium, the fifth abandons. When the minute of the medium, the sixth abandons. When the gross of the minute, the seventh abandons. When the medium of the minute, the eighth abandons. In the manner shown later, one completes thus the *adhimu kticaryā-bhūmi* (信解行地) by exterminating the one hundred and sixty (horizontal) minds (which correspond to the vertical mind) of *adhimukticaryā-bhūmi*.

Then, exterminating (the one hundred and sixty minds the obstacle of which is) the minute of the minute, (and which correspond to) the last of all the nine (stage of the vertical process of mind), he is known to enter into the stage of wisdom (*jñāna-bhūmi* 慧地)".

This enigmatic passage makes sense only when we apply our hypothetical understanding of the above-mentioned structure of human mind.

Here, the nine layers of the one hundred and sixty horizontal minds, which are described as "substantial minds" (*sems kyi dṅos po, citta-vastu*?), are aligned vertically according to the decreasing grossness of the obstruction (*sgrib pa, āvaraṇa*); or, according to the factor of each of these one hundred and sixty minds which obstructs or conceals the original brightness of these "substantial minds". On top of these nine layers, is added the tenth layer of one hundred and sixty minds each of which has no obstructions at all. These ten layers of horizontal minds form the ordinate of the vertical process of ten progressing stages of the mind.

The key to a satisfactory translation of this passage is found in the last

sentence. In Buddhaguhya's system, *adhimukticaryā-bhūmi* (*mos pas spyod paḥi sa* 信解行地), which usually means the ten stage of the *bodhisattvas* (菩薩十地), is the stage just prior to the first stage of the *bodhisattvas* (初地) which is referred to by the word *ye śes hyi sa* (*jñāna-bhūmi?* 慧地) in this passage.

Therefore, when one exterminates the ninth layer of one hundred and sixty minds, the obstruction of which is the minute of the minute, corresponding to the stage just prior to "the stage of wisdom" (*ye śes hyi sa*), one enters into "the stage of wisdom" of one hundred and sixty minds in which there are no obstructions still to be exterminated. This layer of one hundred and sixty minds thus completely purified is nothing other than 'substance' of the mind of enlightenment of the first stage of the *bodhisattvas* (初地菩提心) or "the completely characterless mind" (極無自性心) (see p. 181).

Applying this understanding to the sentence *chuṅ ṅuḥi ḥbriṅ la brgyad spoṅ*, we obtain the meaning of the sentence as follows: "when (the obstruction of the one hundred and sixty minds is) the medium of the minute, (the mind of) the eighth (stage) exterminates (these one hundred and sixty minds)". The above passage should be translated accordingly.

This idea of overcoming the layers of the horizontal one hundred and sixty minds appears also as an exception in the commentary[27] of Śubhakarasiṁha in the well-known passage of his 'secret interpretation' demonstrating the possibility of attaining enlightenment quickly. He translates the passage which corresponds to the last part of the above quotation, *viz. de ltar na gcig gñis gsum bshi lṅa gñis su bsgyur ba byas pas / ḥjig rten paḥi sems brgya drug cu bshal pa gsum gyis ḥdas nas / ḥjig rten pas ḥdas paḥi sems skye ste* / as follows:

秘密主一二三四五再數. 凡百六十心. 越世間三妄執. 出世間心生.[28]

He explains this sentence as follows:

越世間三妄執出世間心生者. 若以淨菩提心爲出世間心. 即是超越三劫瑜祇行. 梵云劫跛. 有二義. 一者時分. 二者妄執. 若依常途解釋. 度三阿僧祇劫得成正覺. 若秘密釋. 超一劫瑜祇行. 即度百六十心等一重麁妄執. 名一阿僧祇劫. 超二劫瑜祇行. 又度一百六十心等一重細妄執. 名二阿僧祇劫. 眞言門行者. 復越一劫. 更度百六十心等一重極細妄執. 得至佛慧初心. 故云三阿僧祇劫成佛也. 若一生度此三妄執. 則一生成佛. 何論時分耶.[29]

"The meaning of the passage 'overcoming three kinds of mundane *kalpas* the supermundane mind occures' is as follows: if this 'supermundane mind' is the pure mind of enlightenment, it requires yogic practice (of unimaginably long period) over the three aeons (*halpa*). The Sanskrit word *halpa* means two things, that is, firstly, duration of time, and secondly, misleading attachment. If we rely on an ordinary interpretation, it means that one attains enlightenment only after the long period of three uncountable aeons. If we rely on the secret interpretation, the meaning is as follows: to exceed the practice of the first

aeon is nothing other than to overcome the layer of one hundred and sixty minds of gross attachment; and this is called the first uncountable aeon. To exceed the practice of the second aeon is to overcome the layer of one hundred and sixty minds of minute attachment; this is called the second uncountable aeon. When a practicer of *mantras* exceeds (the practice of) one more aeon, he attains the first mind of the wisdom of *buddhas* by overcoming the layer of one hundred and sixty minds of extremely minute attachment. Therefore, the enlightenment is said to be attained through three uncountable aeons. If he overcomes these three kinds of attachment in his life, he can attain enlightenment in his very life. Why do we have to call the duration of time to account?"

We also find in Śubhakarasiṁha's commentary an example of the idea classifying the vertical process of the promotion of mind into nine according to the qualities of the defilement of the mind. Explaining the reason why the horizontal minds, which he takes as the minds of defilements (煩悩心 number one hundred and sixty, he states:

以衆生煩悩心．常依二法不得中道故．随事異名輒分爲二． 就此二中． 復更展轉細分之．其名相．具如十萬偈中說．若更上中下九品等．乃至八萬塵勞．廣則無量．[30]

"Whenever one comes into contact with an object, one's mind of defilement comes to have two different names as one always relies on the two extremes but not on the middle way. The names and characteristics (of the one hundred and sixty minds, the number of which can be obtained by) dividing these two minds again and again, are fully mentioned in the (longer *Vairocanābhisaṁbodhi-sūtra* of) 100,000 verses. If we divide (each of these one hundred and sixty minds) into nine classes according to their qualities of superior, medium and inferior, the number of afflictions finally come to eighty thousand. If we divide more minutely, they become innumerable."

From these examples, we assume the original image of the human mind in the *Vairocanābhisaṁbodhi-sūtra* to be as follows:

The human mind is, at any moment, composed of one hundred and sixty monadic or substantial minds, which were referred to in the title of the first chapter of the *sūtr'a* as "various minds" or "distinctions of minds" (*sems hyi hhyad par, cittaviśeṣa*? 心差別) in the Tibetan version, or as "continuation of mind" or "minds as continuations" (*sems hyi rgyud*, 心相續) in the version used by the commentator Buddhaguhya. These minds, which are enumerated, on a basis yet to be known, number one hundred and sixty, and are seen as operations or tendencies of mind, or the forms of operations of mind which were obtained empirically and introspectively by the author of the *sūtra* through the careful

observation of his own mind. These one hundred and sixty monadic minds, being in horizontal row, form the 'width' of the mind of a person.

These one hundred and sixty minds arise in a person as the internal reflection of his various actions towards an object when he comes into contact with that object. Therefore, he can make these minds occur at will by exercising himself upon an object, and accordingly, he can promote his mind by making a new kind of one hundred and sixty minds occur through new action.

The mind of a person, in its total structure, consists of the innumerable layers of these one hundred and sixty minds accumulated throughout the whole course of his life beginning from the first origination of the mind aimed toward enlightenment (初發心) and ending in the actual attainment of enlightenment (現等覺). Here, we can recognize the fact that the idea of one hundred and sixty minds is located on the pivot of the whole theoretical system of the *Vairocanābhisaṁbodhi-sūtra*.

v. The structure of the **Maṇḍala** *of the* **Vairocanābhisaṁbodhi-sūtra**

As was previously mentioned (see p. 182), the universal wisdom (*sarvajñajñāna* (一切智智, which is nothing other than the *dharmakāya* (法身, the body of the ultimate reality) of Vairocana or the world of Vairocana itself, functions so as to allow a person complete his entire life which begins from the circumference of the world of Vairocana and ends at its centre. On the other hand, this person in turn is responsible for the existence of the world of Vairocana and has to live his entire life maintaining at every moment the three conditions of the existence of the world of Vairocana, *viz. bodhicitta* as the cause (菩提心爲因) *haruṇā* as the root (悲爲根本) and *upāya* as the final aim (方便爲究竟). How then is he to live his entire life completely?

As the structure of his mind composed of one hundred and sixty monadic minds requires, he should observe his own one hundred and sixty minds objectively at every moment and judge their position on the 'yardmeasure' of his entire life; that is on the radius of the world of Vairocana. Then, he should overcome the one hundred and sixty minds of each stage by making the one hundred and sixty minds of the next stage occur through his new action for the benefit of others. He drives himself incessantly toward new actions as he is always urged on by the compassion (*haruṇā* 悲) of Vairocana which he is asked to take as the root. He does not terminate even for a moment his self-recognizing or self-negating wisdom. In other words, the aspiring tendency of his mind (*bodhicitta* 菩提心, the mind aimed toward enlightenment) does not allow him to do so. He continues his effort of purifying his one hundred and sixty minds until they come to have no defitements or obstructions left to be purified. He is always guided by his final aim to save all living beings through exertions or means (*upāya* 方便), which are to be realized only when he attains enlightenment (現等覺). Thus, we notice the fact that in any layer of one hundred and sixty

minds occuring at any moment all of the three conditions of the existence of the world of Vairocana are retained, and that these one hundred and sixty monadic or substantial minds are nothing other than the *bodhicitta* (the mind of enlightenment) as is shown in the axiom '*prajñā* plus *upāya* is *bodhicitta*' (see p. 180). This constitutes the world of Vairocana as Buddhaguhya rightly says:

> "One hundred and sixty mundane minds etc. are the material cause (*upādāna-hāraṇa*) of Vairocana".[31]

Furthermore, we notice that the idea of one hundred and sixty minds makes the meaning of the maxim 'recognize your mind truly and thoroughly' clear. This maxim is commanding us to live our entire life of 'the three great uncountable aeons' 三大阿僧祇劫) completely through the incessant effort of recognizing our own one hundred and sixty minds at every moment and overcoming them through actions for the benefit of others.

The total structure of human mind thus being reconstructed, it becomes obvious that the world of Vairocana is to be expressed in a globular form composed of all the lives of all living beings; that is, the accumulations of innumerable layers of one hundred and sixty minds, concentrated toward their common aim, Vairocana as the centre of the world.

As is already shown by both Buddhaguhya and Śubhakarasiṁha, the vertical process of the progress of mind, which is the process of decreasing the defilements or obstructions of each layer of one hundred and sixty minds, is divided into nine stages. It is reasonable to divide the entire process into ten layers by placing one more layer of one hundred and sixty minds which are completely purified upon these nine layers as Kūkai describes in his *Himitsu-maṇḍala-jūjūshin-ron* (秘密曼荼羅十住心論) as follows:

> "The process of the progress of mind is to be divided into innumerable stages; however, we would like to divide it for convenience' sake into ten and classify innumerable minute stages of mind into these ten big classes."[32]

If we try to draw the figure of this world on a plane, it is convenient to add two more layers of one hundred and sixty minds completely purified upon these ten layers and depict them schematically as twelve concentric circles with the diameter of the central circle the same in width as each of the twelve layers (fig. 1).

If we draw a small circle of the same diameter as the width of each layer on the outermost layer of these concentric circles and connect it with two parallel lines with the central circle, we can indicate the entire course of the life of a person who lives in this world of Vairocana. Or, we can express it as a line of twelve small circles set between these parallel lines. The small circle, which indicates the mind of a person at any moment as the aggregate of one hundred

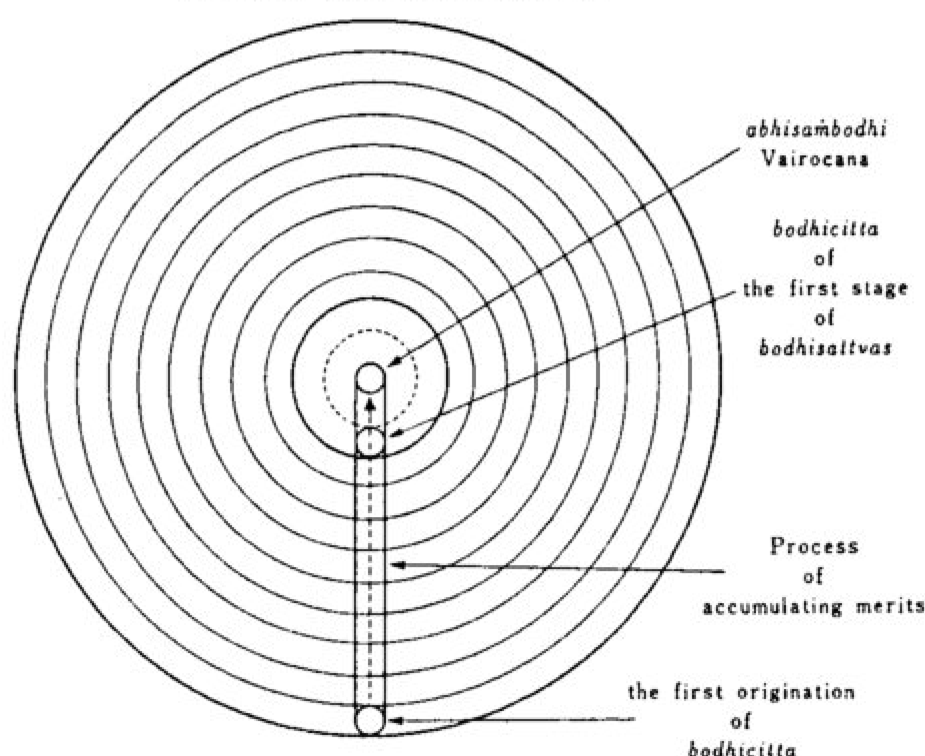


Fig. 1

and sixty monadic minds, decreases in darkness and increases in brightness as it ascends in its course toward the centre i.e. Vairocana. When it reaches the tenth layer, it becomes completely pure. This state is called 'the first course of the realm where the truth is realized' (初法明道), and is mentioned in the *sūtra* as follows:

> "O the chief of *guhyakas*! This is called the entrance into the completely purified mind of enlightenment of the *bodhisattvas*. This is the entrance into the realm where the truth is realized. This is the first course of the realm where the truth is realized. The *bodhisattvas*, who have reached this stage, will be able to attain the trance (*samādhi* 三昧) of exterminating all the obstructions of minds without difficulty. Consequently, attaining this *samādhi*, these *bodhisattvas* will be able to meet with all the *tathāgatas* in the same assembly and will be able to acquire five kinds of supernatural faculties (*abhijñā* 神通). They will acquire mystical charms (*dhāraṇī* 陀羅尼) composed of infinite words, syllables and sounds. They will understand the intentions of living beings. They, being overpowered by all the *tathāgatas*, will come to acquire the truth which will never be ruined in the transmigration. They will never become weary of doing actions for the benefit of living beings. They will observe good precepts even if they are not instituted. Having abandoned the wrong view completely, they will attain the right view and understand it. O the chief of *guhyakal* In the next place, the *bodhisattvas* who stay in this trance of exterminating all the obstruc-

> tions will complete all the truths of *buddhas* without difficulty as they are equipped with the power of confidence (信解力), originated within them. O the chief of *guhyakas*! Concisely speaking, these sons or daughters of noble families will acquire infinite merits".[33]

As is known from this quotation, the inner part of the tenth circle of these concentric circles indicates the ideal realm of the world of Vairocana and is thought to correspond to the palace of Vairocana, "the palace of the grand adamantine sphere of the reality" (大金剛法界宮) mentioned at the beginning of the *sūtra* (see p. 177). Therefore, we can divide the world or *maṇḍala* of Vairocana into two parts (fig. 2): the inner circle (A) which corresponds to the centre and two inner layers of fig. 1 and does not contain any differences of quality or brightness, and the outer circle (B) which corresponds to the outer nine layers of fig. 1 and contains differences of quality or brightness. This inner circle (A) only is adopted by the *Tattvasaṁgrahatantra*. Here it becomes the *Vajradhātu-maṇḍala* composed of five *buddhas* or five families of *buddhas*, the first expression of the Tantric image of the world of the ultimate reality (fig. 2).

The outer circle (B) of the *maṇḍala* of the *Vairocanābhisaṁbodhi-sūtra* having been discarded, the *Vajradhātu-maṇḍala* contains no part representing the realm of people who are on the process of gradual promotion. What is needed for the people of the Tantric world is not the strenuous efforts of accumulating two kinds of merits, *viz.* moral and intellectual, but an 'easy' yogic practice of uniting themselves with the ultimate reality which appears high in the sky as the *Vajradhātu-maṇḍala*.

In the next chapter, we would like to observe the Tantric view of the world, expressed in the *Tattvasaṁgraha-tantra*, which is in every aspect anti-thetical to the Mahāyānic view of the world shown in the *Vairocanābhisaṁ-bodhi-sūtra* discussed in this chapter.

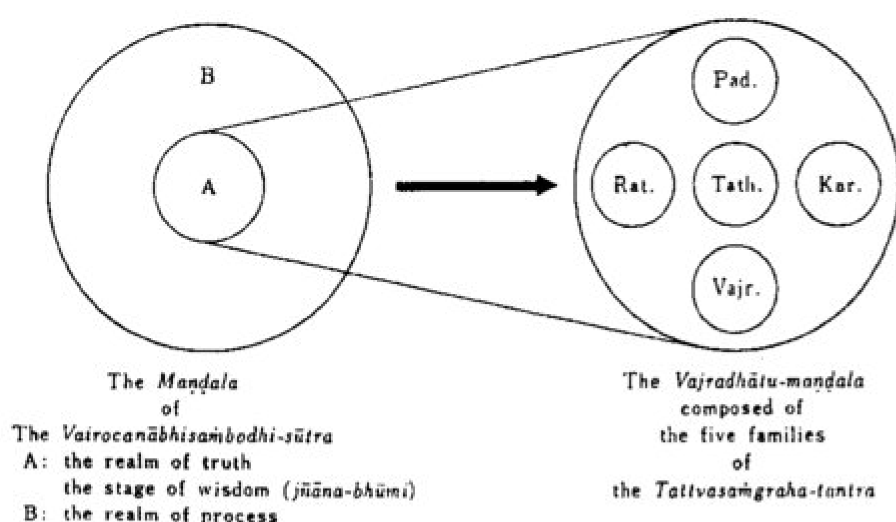


Fig. 2

III. The Tantric view of the world and the logic of *Yoga*

i. The Tantric scenes of attaining enlightenment

First of all, we would like to pick up, from the Sanskrit text, the essential context of the opening part of the mystical drama which represents the image of the world of the *Tattvasaṁgraha-tantra* as follows:

(1) evaṁ mayā śrutam ekasmin samaye (2) bhagavān ...... (3) mahākṛ-pāvairocanaḥ ...... (4) sarvatathāgatādhyuṣita- ...... akaniṣṭhadevarājasya bhavane vijahāra / (5) navanavatibhir bodhisattvakoṭibhiḥ sārdhaṁ / ...... (6) gaṅgānadīvālukāsamākhyātaiś ca tathāgatais tad yathāpi nāma tilabimbam iva paripūrṇaṁ jambūdvipe saṁdṛśyate / ...... (7) atha bhagavān mahāvairocanaḥ sarvākāśadhātusadāvasthitakāyavākcittavajraḥ / (8) sarvatathāgatasamavasaraṇatayā sarvavajradhātvavabodhanajñānasativaḥ / ...... (15) ...... jñānaṁ ...... sarvatathāgataḥ // .... vairocano ...... (17) bhagavān mahābodhicittaḥ samantabhadro mahābodhisattvaḥ sarvatathāgatakāyeṣu vijahāra // atha sarvatathāgatair idaṁ buddhakṣetraṁ tad yathā tilabimbam iva paripūrṇam /[34]

"(1) Thus have I heard at one time. (2) The Reverend Lord ...... (3) Vairocana of great compassion ...... (4) dwelt in the palace of the king of the deities of the uppermost stratum of the region of forms (色究竟天王宮) resided in by all the *tathāgatas* ...... (5) Together with ninety-nine *koṭis* (倶胝) of *bodhisattvas* ...... (6) and *tathāgatas* to be counted by (the number of) the sands of the River *Gaṅgā*, he appeared in the *Jambūdvipa* Continent filling (it) as (sesame seeds fill) a sesame husk.......

(7) At that time, the Reverend Lord Mahāvairocana, who is the adamantine (aggregate of) body, speech and mind which perpetually resides pervading the whole sphere of the sky, (8) who is, as the complete aggregate of all the *tathāgatas* (一切如來) the being of the wisdom (智慧薩埵) which makes people aware of the whole of the adamantine realm (金剛界) ...... (15) ...... who is the wisdom itself ...... who is the one and whole *tathāgata* (一切如來) ......, who is Vairocana, ... (17) the Reverend Lord, the great mind of enlightenment (大菩提心), the great *bodhisattva* Samantabhadrà (普賢大菩薩), dwelt in the hearts of all the *tathāgatas* (一切如來).

Now, this district of the *buddha* was filled with all the *tathāgatas* as (sesame seeds fill) a sesame husk."

It is obvious that this "palace of the king of the deities of the uppermost stratum of the region of forms" (*akaniṣṭhadevarājasya bhavana* (色究竟天王宮) corresponds to "the palace of the grand adamantine sphere of the reality"

(大金剛法界宮) of the *Vairocanābhisaṁbodhi-sūtra* (see p. 196). It is to be noticed, however, that the former is limited to the uppermost stratum of the region of forms (*akaniṣṭhadeva* 色究竟天) which is a kind of space and is at the same time a stage of deepness of meditation, while the latter is the unlimited sphere of the reality (*dharmadhātu* 法界).

Here, the ultimate reality is expressed as the substantial aggregate of all the *tathāgatas*. The word *sarvatathāgata* (一切如來) is essential to an understanding of the image of the world of the *Tattvasaṁgraha-tantra*. When it is used in the singular, it means Vairocana Tathāgata who is the central deity of the *maṇḍala*. When it is used in the plural, it means all of the inumerable *tathāgatas* filling the whole world. These *tathāgatas* as an aggregate constitute a substantial matrix called "the adamantine sphere" (*vajradhātu* 金剛界) or the world of reality. Thirdly, the word *sarvatathāgata* is used in the plural or in the singular indicating the five *buddhas* or each of five *buddhas* who constitute the whole *Vajradhātu-maṇḍala* as representatives of all of the innumerable *tathāgatas*. In accord with the way of thinking found in the *Tattvasaṁgraha-tantra*, if A represents a group B, A is nothing other than B. Therefore, the five *tathāgatas* as five *sarvatathāgatas* are nothing other than all the innumerable *tathāgatas*. This process of thinking was indispensable as the ultimate reality of the *Tattvasaṁgraha-tantra* had to be limited and made visible as the *Vajradhātu-maṇḍala* of five *tathāgatas* so as to enable people living in this world Jambūdvīpa to imitate it homologously and unite themselves with it on the basis of the Tantric logic of yoga (see p.171).

The world of reality itself is theistically called Mahāvairocana; and in correspondence to the idea of the *dharmakāya* of Vairocana in the *Vairocanābhisaṁbodhi-sūtra*, it exists perpetually. However, when it was located in "the palace of the king of the deities of the uppermost stratum of the region of forms", it was the reality yet to be limited and was not manifested to people living in the Jambūdvīpa. There, it was a kind of imaginary or ideal existence as is assumed from the expression "dwelt in the hearts of all the *tathāgatas*".

The second scene of this mystic drama is laid in this world of Jambūdvīpa. Vairocana who descended from the Akaniṣṭha heaven shows himself for a moment as Śākyamuni Tathāgata on the earth.

Bodhisattva Sarvārthasiddhi (一切義成就菩薩), that is, Śākyamuni immediately before the attainment of enlightenment, having completed entirely the necessary process of accumulating two kinds of merits, *viz.* moral and intellectual, was sitting on the seat of enlightenment (*bodhimaṇḍa* 菩提道場) and was absorbed in the trance of no movement (*āsphānaka-samādhi* 無動三昧), having stopped all the movements of his body, speech and mind and even having stopped breathing. All the *tathāgatas* make their appearance to the *bodhisattva* and awaken him with the following words:

> *kathaṁ kulaputrānuttarāṁ samyaksaṁbodhim abhisambhotsyase yas tvaṁ sarvatathāgatatattvānabhijñatayā sarvaduḥkarāṇy utsahasīti* //[35]

"O son of a noble family! How can you attain the highest and complete enlightenment, you who are enduring all kinds of difficult deeds (難行) without knowing the truth of all the *tathāgatas*?"

The *bodhisattva*, recovering self-consciousness and coming back from the trance, asks the *tathāgatas* the way to attain the truth and the proposition of the truth itself as follows:

bhagavantas tathāgatā ājñāpayata kathaṁ pratipadyāmi hidṛśaṁ tattvam iti //
"O Reverend Lord! Tell me, how and what kind of truth shall I attain?"[36]

All the *tathāgatas*, accordingly, teach him the so-called 'five-stepped process of attaining enlightenment (*pañcākārābhisaṁbodhi-krama* 五相成身觀). The *bodhisattva* practises as he was taught and attains the highest and complete enlightenment on the spot and becomes Vajradhātu Tathāgata (金剛界如來). Here we notice that the Mahāyānic ideal of strenuous effort (難行), which had been proposed by the *Vairocanābhisaṁbodhi-sūtra*, was surpassed by the awakening words abovementioned. Thus, the Tantric ideal of quick attainment of enlightenment through the easy practice (易行) of *yoga* was declared on the basis of a clear methodical consciousness.

The method of attaining "the truth of all the *tathāgatas*", that is, the ultimate truth is shown here, and the *bodhisattva* Sarvārthasiddhi actually attained the ultimate truth by this method. Therefore, we can observe the ultimate truth itself and the method of attaining the truth in his 'five-stepped process of ataining enlightenment'.

Each of five steps constituting the whole process are composed of the following three factors:

a a step of instruction for observing the truth given by all the *tathāgatas*.
b a *mantra* (mystical spell) which can be substituted for (a).
c Sarvārthasiddhi's perception of the truth shown in a concrete, symbolic figure as the result of (b).

For example, the passage which corresponds with the first step, *viz.* so-called 'piercing into the mind of enlightenment' (通達菩提心) is described as follows:

evam ukte sarvatathāgatās taṁ bodhisattvam ekakaṇṭhenaivam āhuḥ / pratipadyasva kulaputra suncittapratyavekṣaṇasamādhānena prakṛtisiddhena rucijaptena mantreṇeti //
Oṁ cittaprativedhaṁ karomi //
atha bodhisattvaḥ sarvatathāgatān evam āha / ājñātaṁ me bhagavantas tathāgatāḥ svahṛdi candramaṇḍalākāraṁ paśyāmi /[37]

"When (the *bodhisattva*) asked (the question) abovementioned, all the *tathāgatas* told the *bodhisattva* in unison as follows:

'Attain (the mind of enlightenment first) through the meditation of observing your own mind carefully, by reciting the following *mantra*, as many times as you like, the efficacy of which is established by nature.

Oṁ cittaprativedhaṁ karomi

(*Oṁ* I will pierce my mind into its bottom.)

Then, the *bodhisattva* said to all the tathāgatas as follows:

'I was taught. O Reverend *Tathāgatasl* I see the appearance of the lunar disk on my heart.'

Here, we must notice first the fact that *svacittapratyavekṣaṇasamādhānena* and *prakṛtisiddhena rucijaptena mantreṇa* are appositional. The word *pratyavekṣaṇa* instantly reminds us the process of observing each of the one hundred and sixty monadic minds individually as we have explained in the previous chapter. In the *Vairocanābhisaṁbodhi-sūtra*, one was able to "pierce one's own mind to its bottom" and attain the completely purified mind of enlightenment only by completing the entire process of accumulating "infinite materials of both meritorious deeds and knowledge for an unimaginably long period of hundreds of thousands of millions of innumerable aeons" (see p. 181). Here, however, the *mantra* "*Oṁ* I will pierce my mind into the bottom" replaces the entire process. This is not astonishing, however, for a Tantrist, for the simple reason that a *mantra* has such a miraculous efficacy by nature (*prakṛtisiddha*). The laborious process of promoting one's own mind by observing layers of one hundred and sixty monadic minds incessantly and by overcoming them through actual deeds for the benefit of others, which continues for nearly eternal period of the three great uncountable aeons, was thus replaced by an easy practice of simply reciting a *mantra* as many times as one likes. Here, even *upāya*, our direct and actual exertions for the benefit of others, was replaced by a symbolical deed, not to speak of *prajñā*, a mental operation of observing the essencelessness (*śūyatā* 空性). Herein we find a critical turning point from Mahāyāna Buddhism or especially the *Vairocanābhi-saṁbodhi-sūtra* to Tantrism.

In addition, the attainment of the mind of enlightenment is depicted symbolically here through the appearance of the lunar disk on the heart. This means that, if one can manipulate the symbolic figure which appears in his mind in meditation, one can conversely control the world of reality through it. This idea of controlling the world of reality through the manipulation of symbols is represented in the five-stepped process of attaining enlightenment which can be summarized according to the three factors above-mentioned as follows:[36]

I. The step of piercing into the mind of enlightenment (通達菩提心).

a "Attain (the mind of enlightenment first) through the meditation of observing your mind carefully."

b *Oṁ cittaprativedhaṁ karomi.*
(*Oṁ* I will pierce my mind to its bottom.)
c "I see the appearance of the lunar disk on my heart."

II. The step of realizing the mind of enlightenment (修菩提心).

a "(Your) mind (thus imagined) is (nothing but the universal mind) shining by its own nature (*prkṛtiprabhāsvara* 自性清淨)."
b *Oṁ bodhicittam utpādayāmi*
(*Oṁ* I will make the mind of enlightenment arise.)
c Sarvārthasiddhi actually made the mind of enlightenment arise through reciting the *mantra* (b) which is by nature efficient. He says: "I see that the appearance of the lunar disk is nothing but the lunar disk itself."

III. The step of realizing the adamantine mind (修金剛心).

a "This is the heart of all the *tathāgatas* for you. You actually made your mind of Samantabhadra (普賢心) arise. So as to make this arisen mind firm, you should imagine the figure of a *vajra*-pestle in the lunar disk of your heart through reciting following *mantra*."
b *Oṁ tiṣṭha vajra.* (*Oṁ* Stand up! O Vajra!)
c "I see the *vajra*-pestle in the lunar disk."

IV. The step of realizing the adamantine body 修金剛身).

a "Make this adamantine mind of Samantabhadra (which is composed) of all the *tathāgatas* firm through the following *mantra*."
b *Oṁ vajrātmako 'ham.*
(*Oṁ* I am of the essence of the adamant.)
c The whole adamantine sphere (*vajradhātu* 金剛界) composed of the bodies, speeches and minds of all the *tathāgatas* pervading the whole sphere of the sky enters into this adamantine existence (*sattvavajra* 薩埵金剛) (of the *bodhisattva* Sarvārthasiddhi) through the benefit of all the *tathāgatas*. He is invested by all the *tathāgatas* with the consecratory name 'Vajradhātu' (金剛界). He says: "O Reverend Tathāgatas! I see myself as the body (composed) of all the *tathāgatas*."

V. The step of the body of a *buddha completed* (佛身円滿).

a "Imagine yourself as 'the adamantine existence' (*sattvavajra*) which is equipped with all the most excellent aspects (of the whole universe) and (at the same time) the figure of a *buddha* (as the centre of the universe)."
b *Oṁ yathā sarvatathāgatās tathāham.*
(*Oṁ* As all the *tathāgatas* are, so am I.)
c Thus, Vajradhātu Bodhisattva attains the highest and complete enlightenment.

Here, with this fifth *mantra*, "the truth of all the *tathāgatas*", that is, the ultimate truth is indicated. This *mantra* is nothing other than the universal formula through which anyone can attain enlightenment quickly and easily within his very lifetime (*ihaiva janmani*). As was mentioned above (see p. 171), this formula was interpreted by the subsequent Tantrists as follows:

> "If the individual existence and the ultimate reality are homologous, they are one and the same."

therefore:

> "If the individual existence successfully reorganizes itself to be homologous with the ultimate reality, the former can unite itself with the latter."

This is what we call 'the logic of Ṭantrism' or 'the logic of *yoga*'. This entire process of five steps itself provides an example of this logic. As the *bodhisattva* Sarvārthasiddhi recited the fourth *mantra* "*Oṁ vajrātmako 'ham*" (*Oṁ* I am of the essence of the adamant), which controls the world of reality, the entire adamantine sphere (*vajradhātu* 金剛界), the ultimate reality itself, entered into "the adamantine existence" which is the symbolic representation imagined in his mind. Thus, "the adamantine existence" was completed as a symbolic system representing the adamantine sphere in miniature. Then, he imagines himself as identical with this symbol which is "equipped with all the most excellent aspects" (*sarvāhāravaropetaṁ*). It is to be noted that the word *sarvākār-avaropetaṁ* refers to the *dharmakāya* of a *buddha* or the whole world of reality, while the word *buddhabimbam* ("equipped with the figure of a *buddha*") refers to a *buddha* of *saṁbhogakāya* (the body of enjoyment) which is the centre of the world and is equipped with thirty-two *lakṣaṇas* (三十二相) and eighty *anuvyañ-janas* (八十種好). Recitation of the fifth *mantra* "*Oṁ yathā sarvatathāgatās tathāham*" (*Oṁ* as all the *tathāgatas* are, so am I) makes him realize that he himself is homologous with, and therefore identical with the aggregate of all the *tathāgatas* or the entire adamantine sphere as he is identical with the symbolic figure which is the miniature of the adamantine sphere. Thus, he, while retaining the individual "figure" as the centre of the world, becomes the entire world of reality itself. In this manner, he, the individual existence, successfully united himself with the ultimate reality through the catalytic action of "the adamantine existence", a system of symbols constructed mechanically through the recitation of *mantras* and the imagination of symbolic figures. After this, anyone can reorganize himself mechanically through reciting *mantras* and imagining symbolic figures into a symbolic system which is homologous with the ultimate reality, and consequently unite himself easily and quickly with the ultimate reality. Thus, the secret of the quick attainent of enlightenment was revealed.

The *bodhisattva* Sarvārthasiddhi attained enlightenment in this manner and

became Vajradhātu Tathāgata (金剛界如來) who was concurrently Śākyamuni Buddha who attained enlightenment on the seat of enlightenment *bodhi-maṇḍa* 菩提道場) under a *bodhi*-tree on the bank of the River Nairañjanā in the suburbs of Gayā. As soon as Sarvārthasiddhi became the *buddha*, all the *tathāgatas* led him away from this world to "the pavillion with the pinnacle of adamantine jewel" (*vajramaṇiratnaśikharakūtāgāra* 金剛摩尼寶頂樓閣) situated on the top of Mt. Sumeru in order to enthrone him as the creator of the whole universe (*viśvakarman*) as the representative (*sarvatathāgata*, sg.) of all the *tathāgatas* (*sarvatathāgata*, pl.).

In the third scene of this mystical drama, all the *tathāgatas* arriving at the palace nominate Vajradhātu Tathāgata, that is, Vairocana for the position of their representative making him ascend the lion-seat as the representative of all the *tathāgatas* (*sarvatathāgatasiṁhāsana*) and sit on the throne facing in all the directions.

Subsequently, the four *tathāgatas, viz. Akṣobhya* (阿閦), Ratnasaṁbhava (寶生), Lokeśvararāja (世自在王) and Amoghasiddhi (不空成就) nominate themselves for the position of representatives (*sarvatathāgata*) of all of the innumerable *tathāgatas* and sit on all sides of "the Reverend Lord Sākyamuni Tathāgata". Thus, the five *tathāgatas* constituting the adamantine sphere were selected.

According to the Tantric way of thinking, 'when A represents a group B, A is identical with the whole of B'. Therefore, these five *tathāgatas* are nothing other than all of the innumerable *tathāgatas* filling the whole world of reality. In other words, the ultimate reality, with Śākyamuni Buddha as its nucleus, appears itself as the aggregate of five *tathāgatas*. Just as a transparent solution gels when a drop of reagent is added, as the process of self-realization progresses further, the ultimate reality makes its appearance finally as the *Vajradhātu-maṇḍala* of thirty-seven deities high above the world of human beings.

We can illustrate this process of self-realization of "the adamantine sphere" as follows (fig. 3).

"The adamantine sphere", the world of reality as the aggregate of all the innumerable *tathāgatas* can be expressed by two concentric circles. The inner circle corresponds to the central circle of the *maṇḍala* of the *Vairocanābhi-saṁbodhi-sūtra* (fig. 1) and represents Vairocana Tathāgata. The outer circle corresponds to the centre and inner two layers of fig. 1 or the inner circle (A) of fig. 2 within which there is no difference of brightness. When this "adamantine sphere" is situated on "the palace of the king of the Akaniṣṭha deities" (*akaniṣṭhadevarājasya bhavana*) (scene i.), these two circles are drawn with dotted lines as the sphere has not yet made its appearance to us existing on earth. When Śākyamuni Buddha, who can also be represented by the central circle of fig. 1, appears on the earth after completing the process of accumulating merits over the three great uncountable aeons, the concentric circles of "the adamantine sphere" descend from the Akaniṣṭha heaven, its inner circle overlapping with the circle of Śākyamuni is solidified and Vairocana, who is an imaginary or ideal being in the

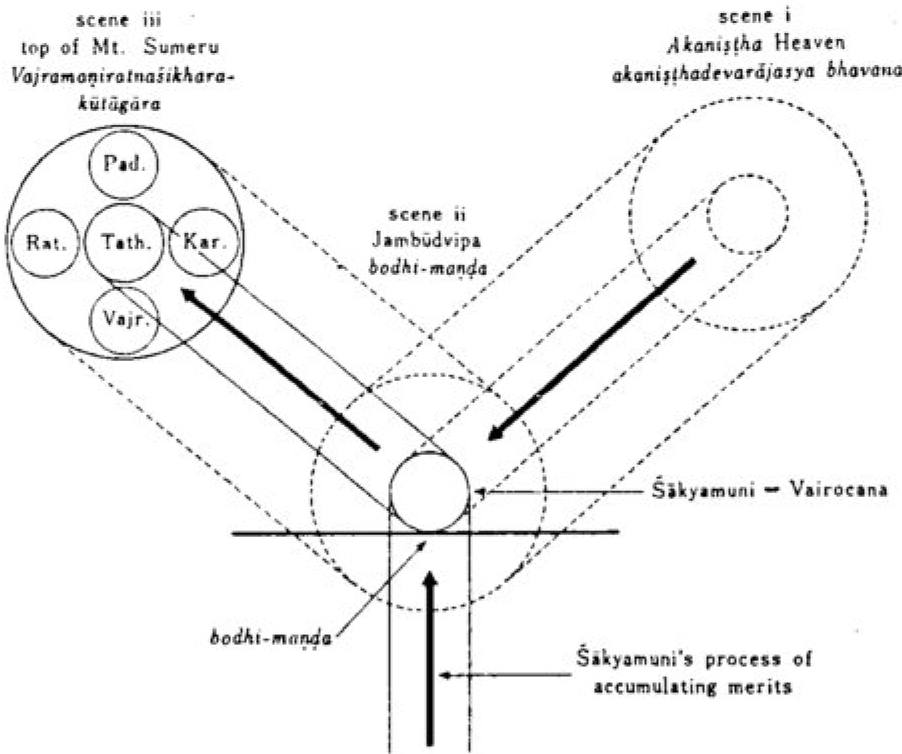


Fig. 3

Akaniṣṭha heaven, is actualized for the first time when he descends to the earth synchronously with Śākyamuni's attainment of enlightenment (scene ii.).

The world of reality which has descended to the earth springs up to the top of Mt. Sumeru in the next moment and disappears from the earth. Here at "the pavillion with the pinnacle of adamantine jewel" (scene iii.), the world of reality actualizes itself as the *Vajradhātu-maṇḍala*, *viz.* the aggregate of five *tathāgatas* or five families of *tathāgatas*. Only when "the adamantine sphere" as the aggregate of all the innumerable *tathāgatas* is concretized as the aggregate of five *tathāgatas*, can we imagine it and make ourselves homologous with is through the manipulation of symbols.

Here, it must again be noted that this *maṇḍala* of the *Tattvasaṁgrahatantra* does not contain any distinctions of brightness and that for us who live on earth it exists externally. Homogenuity and externality are the two special features of the *maṇḍala* of the religion of *yogins* or sitting meditators who attempt to unite themselves with the external absolute through the yogic practice.

ii. The new concept of quick attainment of enlightenment

Having noted this process of the self-development of "the adamantine sphere" which descends from the Akaniṣṭha heaven to the earth and springs up in the next moment to the top of Mt. Sumeru just like a ball bounded on the floor, we may possibly interpret the image of the world of the *Tattvasaṁgraha-tantra* in the same way as we interpreted the world of the *Vairocanābhisaṁbodhi-sūtra*, attaching importance to our world, Jambūdvīpa.

Sākyamuni appeared on the earth as a *buddha* after completing "all kinds of difficult deeds" over the period of the three great uncountable aeons. By becoming

a *buddha*, he made himself the nucleus of "the adamantine sphere", and made "the adamantine sphere" which had existed as *dynamis* or as an ideal or possible being actual in its turn as the *Vajradhātu-maṇḍala* composed of five *tathāgatas* or five families of *tathāgatas*. "The adamantine sphere" or the universal *buddha* Mahāvairocana perpetually exists pervading the whole universe, but it is not significant for us until it actualizes itself as a *maṇḍala* visible to us. 5,670,000,000 years subsequent to Śākyamuni, Maitreya Buddha will appear on earth, make himself Vairocana, the centre of the world of reality, and thereby cause the world of reality, the universal *buddha* Mahāvairocana to shine forth. Similarly, innumerable *buddhas* will appear on the earth (Jambūdvīpa) one after another, and Vairocana will continue shining at the centre of the universe. We also in our turn, after completing the process of accumulating two kinds of merits over the period of the three great uncountable aeons, will appear on earth as *buddhas* and cause the world of reality to shine forth. Therefore, everyone of us is responsible for the existence of the world of reality and is requested to continue incessantly both moral and intellectual efforts for the sake of others and ourselves.

This romantic interpretation is not untenable. In fact, the thousand *buddhas* of this aeon (*bhadrakalpa* 賢劫) are waiting for the time when they will attain enlightenment and make the whole *maṇḍala* shine forth as the centre of the world of reality. On the other hand, however, a completely new method of attaining enlightenment is also presented here. The Mahāyānic ideal of attaining enlightenment through difficult deeds has been rejected by the awakening words abovementioned (see p. 199), the meaning of which is as follows:

> "If you do not know the truth of the universe, you can not attain enlightenment even thought you complete the entire process of accumulating merits over the three great uncountable aeons."

One can attain enlightenment not by accumulating merits but by realizing the ultimate truth which was revealed as the fifth *mantra* of the five-stepped process of attaining enlightenment (五相成身観). Śākyamuni's actual attainment of enlightenment was not a result of the completion of the entire process of accumulating merits, but rather a result of the practice of the five-stepped process of attaining enlightenment. His accumulation of merits had nothing to do with his attainment of enlightenment structurally. In the *Tattvasaṁgraha-tantra*, an individual existence is requested structurally to do nothing more than provide the mouth which recites *mantras*, the mind which imagines symbolic figures and the hands which bind finger-postures (*mudrā* 印契). The ultimate reality had already appeared at "the pavillion with the pinnacle of adamantine jewel" on the top of Mt. Sumeru as the *Vajradhātu-maṇḍala* of thirty-seven deities.

The *Tattvasaṁgraha-tantra* mentions four kinds of *mudrās, viz. mahāmudrā* (大印), that is, the thirty-seven deities expressed in pictures or statues, *samaya-mudrā* (三昧耶印), the hand-postures expressing these deities by assuming the emblems of each of them, *dharmamudrā* (法印), that is, the *mantras* or syllables

(*bīja* 種子) which indicate each of these deities and *karmamudrā* (羯摩印), hand-postures expressing actions of each of these deities. Each of these four kinds of symbols can serve as a substitute for the deities which they symbolize. The symbol is identical to the symbolized. Through the monumentous fact of Śākyamuni's attainment of enlightenment, the ultimate reality has been actualized as the *Vajradhātu-maṇḍala* of thirty-seven deities. If one recites the five *mantras* of the five-stepped process of attaining enlightenment and imagines the transformation of the symbolic figure in one's mind, one instantly enters into the centre of the *maṇḍala* and attains enlightenment. Or if one imagines figures of thirty-seven deities in one's mind, recites *mantras* or syllables of each of these deities and binds hand-postures (*mudrā*) of them in regular succession, one can transform oneself into symbolic representation of "the adamantine sphere" and unite oneself with it on the spot as one is completely homologous with it. Since Śākyamuni has attained enlightenment, we need not perform any deeds of accumulating merits. This is the new concept of quick attainment of enlightenment which is completely antithetical to the Mahāyānic idea of the gradual attainment of enlightenment advocated in the *Vairocanābhisaṁbodhi-sūtra*.

In the *Vairacanābhisaṁbodhi-sūtra*, both *prajñā*, the wisdom of observing essencelessness (*śūnyatā* 空性), and *upāya*, actual deeds performed through compassion (*karuṇā* 慈悲) for the benefit of others, were indispensable in allowing a person to exist in the world of reality. Unlike *prajñā*, *upāya* could not be substituted by a symbol as it was actual and direct to the end. The practicer of the *Tattvasaṁgraha-tantra* very easily passed over the ridge which the Mahāyānic practicer of the *Vairocanābhisaṁbodhi-sūtra* did not dare pass over, his yogic manner of thinking allowing him to do so. As we have already mentioned (see p. 168), the follower of the *Tattvasaṁgraha-tantra* is a solitary *yogin* confronting the absolute by himself. For him the actual world, society or the existence of others is of no significance. For him capabilities, ethical or religious efforts and even the friendliness and mercy towards others (慈悲), that is, the essential virtue of Mahāyāna Buddhism, are not at all necessary. This feature of Tantrism is the most clearly expressed in the following passage which mentions the adventitiousness of such capabilities as qualifications for entering the *Vajradhātu-maṇḍala*:

> "Then, I will show the extensive ritual of entering into the Grand *maṇḍala* of the *Vajradhātu* and other (rituals) for an adamantine disciple.
>
> First of all, the purpose of entering (into the *Vajradhātu-maṇḍala*) is to attain the aim of the highest accomplishment of saving all living beings of the world without remainder and without leavings, and making them all prosperous and comfortable. In this case, it should not be decided whether or not he is competent for entering into the Grand *maṇḍala*. What is the reason?
>
> O Reverend Tathāgatas! There might be some people who commit

great crimes. However, once they see this Grand *maṇḍala* of the *Vajradhātu* and enter into it, they will get rid of all the crimes.

O Reverend Tathāgatas! There might be some people who are covetous of all kinds of food, drink and objects of sense, who hate religious precepts (*samaya* 三昧耶) and who are not competent for preparatory rites. Nevertheless, once they enter into this (*Vajradhātu-maṇḍala*), all the desires will be fulfilled completely even for them as things are effected in conformance with their desire (in this *maṇḍala*).

O Reverend Tathāgatas! There might be some people who indulge in all kinds of dances, songs, comical or lascivious dances, food and games, entering into the *maṇḍalas* of the families of heretical deities without realizing the truth through the clear understanding of the Mahāyāna of all the *tathāgatas*. They do not enter into the *maṇḍala* of the family of all the *tathāgatas* which is the aggregate of those which fulfill all the desires and which brings about the highest pleasure, satisfaction and joy, as they are frightened by the fear of moral precepts. For these people who face the evil *maṇḍalas*, it is suitable to enter into the Grand *maṇḍala* of the *Vajradhātu* as they can enjoy the pleasure and happiness of the highest accomplishment of all the pleasures and joys, and turn back from the way leading to all evil states.

Furthermore, O Reverend Tathāgatas! There might be some virtuous people who, wishing to attain the enlightenment of a *buddha* by means of the highest accomplishment of precepts, concentration of mind and wisdom, make efforts on the (four) stages of meditation, (eight kinds of) getting rid (of attachments) and so on. Still they might be afflicted (not getting enlightenment). For them, the state of all the *tathāgatas* is not difficult to attain simply by entering into the Grand *maṇḍala* of the *Vajradhātu* on the spot, much less the other accomplishments."[39]

Thus, the new concept of quick attainment of enlightenment (即身成佛) was declared definitely and logically as the antithesis of the Mahāyānic ideal of the gradual attainment of enlightenment through the accumulation of moral and intellectual merits. The secret of the quick attainment of enlightenment was actually presented to everyone in a logically thorough manner. However, this logical thoroughness, extreme easiness and quickness of attaining enlightenment, and the structural adventitiousness of moral and intellectual efforts, in short, all the features of this Tantric concept of quick attainment of enlightenment effected the dissolution of the religion of the *Tattvasaṁgraha-tantra* itself. When it declared "the truth of all the *tathāgatas*" or the universal formula of quick attainment of enlightenment triumphantly, it found itself standing on the brink of the dizzy precipice of nihilism. This religious vacuity undoubtedly caused great uneasiness in the minds of subsequent Tantrists and drove them to the opposite extreme. In fact, a group of Tantrists who were the orthodox inheri-

tors of the religion of the *Tattvasaṁgraha-tantra* took as their recourse the hideous and repulsive cult of cemetery (*śmaśāna*).

IV. The Hevajra-tantra: Buddhism of cemetery

i. The group of Yoginīs*: the new matrix of enlightenment*

The most definite description of the religion of Buddhist immigrants to 'the cult of cemetery (*śmaśāna* 尸林)' centered on a group of *yoginis* (*yoginī-cakra* 瑜伽女輪) can be found in a passage of the *Hevajra-tantra* (HV, I.v.4.~8.), which has been reconstructed by D.L. Snellgrove as follows:

mudrāḥ pañcahulānīti kathyate mokṣahetunā //
vajreṇa mudryate 'nena mudrā tenāvhidhīyate // (4)
Vajra Padma tathā Karma Tathāgata Ratnaiva ca //
kulāni pañcavidhāny āhur uttamāni mahākṛpa // (5)
Vajre Ḍombī bhaven mudrā Padme Nartī tathaiva ca //
Karmaṇi Rajaky ākhyātā Brāhmaṇi ca Tathāgate // (6)
Ratne Caṇḍālinī jñeyā pañcamudrā viniścitāḥ //
tathāgatahulaṃ caitat saṃh'ṣepenābhidhīyate // (7)
tathatāyāṃ gataḥ śrīmān āgataś ca tathaiva ca //
anayā prajñayā yuhtyā tathāgato 'bhidhīyate // (8)[40]

"(4) In order that one may gain release, these Mudrā are identified with the Five Families. She is called Mudrā or Sign, because she is signed with the Vajra.

(5) Vajra, Padma, Karma, Tathāgata, Ratna; these are known as the Five Families supreme, O thou of great compassion. (6 and 7) These then are their five Mudrā: Ḍombī for Vajra, Nartī for Padma, Rajakī for Karma, Brāhmaṇī for Tathāgata, and Caṇḍālinī for Ratna. For short, they are called the families of the *tathāgatas*. (8) He enters supreme reality, he the Blessed One, and comes just as he went, and so on account of this play on words, it's as *Tathāgata* he's known."[41]

However, this reconstruction, especially verse 6, the essential part of this passage, is difficult to support on the basis of the manuscripts[42] we have examined thus far. We would reconstruct it as follows:

mudrāḥ pañcahulānīti hathyate mokṣahetunā /
vajreṇa mudryate 'nena mudrā tenābhidhīyate //4//
vajrapadmaṁ tathā karma tathāgataṁ ratnam eva ca /
kulāni pañcavidhāny āhur uttamāni mahākṛpa //5//
vajraṁ ḍombi bhaven mudrā padmaṁ nartī tathaiva ca /
karma rajahī samākhyātā brāhmaṇī ca tathāgatī //6//

ratnaṁ caṇḍālinī jñeyā pañcamudrā viniścitāḥ /
tathāgatakulaṁ caitat saṁkṣepenābhidhīyate //7//
tathatāyā gataḥ śrīmān āgataś ca tathaiva ca /
anayā prajñayā yuktyā tathāgato 'bhidhīyate //8//

This reconstruction offers a clear vision of a new stage of Tantric Buddhism which has overcome successfully the unrealistic or ideal character of the religion of the *Tattvasaṁgraha-tantra* and has recovered religious 'substantiality' on the basis of the psychological and psychological strain experienced during the hideous and, at the same time, enchanting cults of the group of *yoginīs*. We can translate this passage as follows:

"The fact that the five *mudrās* (which constitute the group of *yoginīs*) are nothing other than the five families (of *tathāgatas* constituting the *Vajradhātu-maṇḍala* of the *Tattvasaṁgraha-tantra*[43]) is declared to be the cause of (attaining) liberation. She (that is, a *yoginī*) is called *mudrā* or sign as she is signed with an adamant (*vajra*) (4).

Vajra, Padma, Karma, Tathāgata and Ratna are said to be the five highest kinds of families, O you of great compassion (5)!

The *mudrā* Ḍombī is (nothing other than) the Vajra (-family), and likewise, (the *mudrā*) Nartī is (nothing other than) the Padma (-family). (The *mudrā*) Rajakī is said to be (nothing other than) the Karma (-family), and (the *mudrā*) Brāhmaṇī is (the *mudrā* who is nothing other than) the Tathāgata (-family) (6).

Caṇḍālinī is known to be (nothing other than) the Ratna (-family). (Thus,) five families are set down. In short, (the whole of) this (world of reality which is the aggregate of these five *mudrās* or five families) is (nothing other than the centre of the world i.e.) the Tathāgata-family (7). (The Lord Hevajra), the auspicious one, who has gone to reality (*tathatā*), and who has come back from (the reality) is called *tathāgata* because he is united with *prajñā* (the wisdom of enlightenment which is at the same time a woman called *mudrā* or an aggregate of those *mudrās*, that is, *yoginī-cakra*) (8)."

In the *Tattvasaṁgraha-tantra*, the ultimate reality appeared in a imaginary, mystical region of the Akaniṣṭha heaven high above the world. Practicers should have been able to unite themselves with this ultimate reality very easily and very quickly only by reciting *mantras*, binding *mudrās* (hand-postures) and imagining symbolic figures (*samaya* 三昧耶形) in the mind. Qualifications, abilities and efforts moral or intellectual were not necessary. In short, they did not have to do anything 'religious'. This complete ease of attaining enlightenment, however, caused the distinction between the enlightened state and the non-enlightened state to be minimized. Though they may attain enlightenment, they would not be able to confirm it objectively or subjectively on psychological and physiological

grounds. Thus, the methodical completion of the idea of quick attainment of enlightenment in the *Tattvasaṁgraha-tantra* resulted in 'religious vacuity'. This 'vacuity' caused strong anxiety, and this anxiety in turn drove them to another extreme; the extreme *Numinose* of the heretical cult of cemetery (*śmaśāna*). This provided a psychological strain through the hideous, sanguinary and horrible cults of a cemetery filled with a putrid smell, as well as the strong physiological stimuli of the sexual yogic practice experienced in the group of bewitching *yoginīs*. Thus they established the religion of the *Hevajra-tantra*, the characteristics of which were fully indicated in the above quotation.

In this quotation, the five families comprising the *Vajradhātu-maṇḍala* have been replaced with the group of five *mudrās* or *yoginīs* (fig. 4).

Now, "the adamantine sphere" appears not in the lofty, imaginary region of the Akaniṣṭha heaven but on earth as a group of *yoginīs* with which one can unite oneself actually through sexual yogic practice. The one and only God Hevajra who is sexually united with the group of five *yoginīs* is nothing other than the *dharmakāya* (法身, the body of the ultimate reality) of Vairocana who is himself the aggregate of the five families of the *Vajradhātu-maṇḍala* as well as the one and only being subsuming the whole *maṇḍala*. A *buddha* in the *dharmakāya* form, constituting both the whole of the *maṇḍala* and the centre of the *maṇḍala*, as was referred to in the *Vairocanābhisaṁbodhi-sūtra* and the *Tattvasaṁgraha-tantra* in idea only, actually appeared on the earth as the demonic God Heruka, alias Hevajra.

The group of *yoginīs* has decisive reality. It is nothing other than the female principle *prajñā* and in this quotation it is regarded as *tathatā* (眞如). It is a new, real matrix in which enlightenment is realized certainly on psychological and physiological grounds. Therefore, as is indicated by the axiom '*prajñā* plus *upāya* is *bodhicitta*' (see p. 180), the God Hevajra, who is by himself the male principle *upāya*, is realized as the ultimate reality *bodhicitta* as long as his is united with these *yoginīs*. A practicer who regards himself as Hevajra, visiting a group of these *yoginīs* in a place of cemetery and practising sexual *yoga* with them, attains enlightenment on the spot.

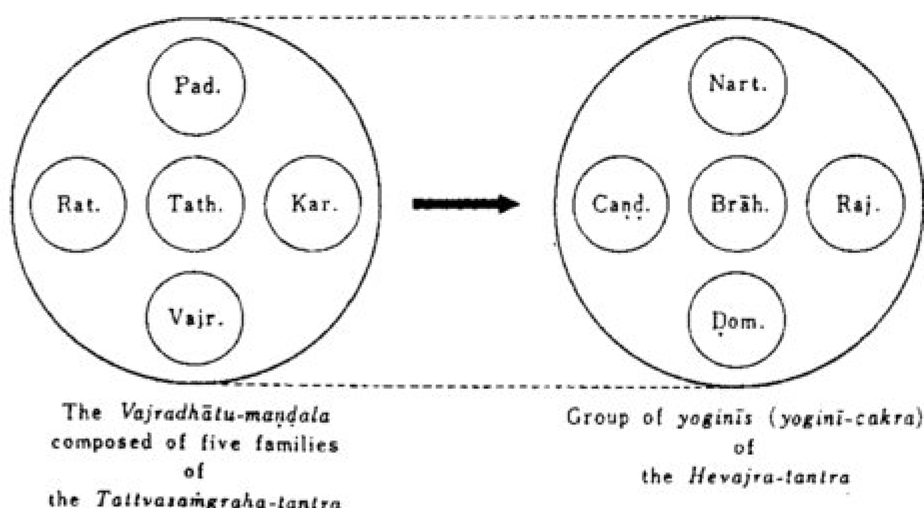


Fig. 4

In the *Tattvasaṁgraha-tantra*, the enlightenment should be possible for anyone, regardless of their personal qualifications or abilities, if only they enter into the *maṇḍala*. In the *Hevajra-tantra*, it has become possible for one to enter into the *maṇḍala* actually. Thus, a concrete method to realize the ideal of the quick attainment of enlightenment declared in the *Tattvasaṁgraha-tantra* was presented in the *Hevajra-tantra*.

ii. The fourth consecration: the critical turn of the Hevajra-tantra

In the *Hevajra-tantra*, which synthesized the Tantric logic of *yoga* declared in the *Tattvasaṁgraha-tantra* and the cult of cemetery, Tantrism developed to its apex. Though it was a clever device of the author of the *Hevajra-tantra* to identify the group of *yoginīs* with the *Vajradhātu-maṇḍala*, the matrix of enlightenment, when, following the Mahāyānic tendency within himself, he regarded each of the five *yoginīs* or *mudrās* as completely identical with the corresponding families of the *Vajradhātu-maṇḍala*, he betrayed, if not consciously, the Tantric logic of symbolism. When we say, according to the Tantric way of thinking, "if a symbol A symbolizes B, A is identical with B" or "when A represents a group B, A is identical with the whole B", it is tacitly understood that A and B are objectively different. Therefore, when the author of the *Hevajra-tantra* attempted to symbolize the *Vajradhātu* of five families by a group of *yoginīs* or *mudrās*, he should have been contented with the fact that a *yoginī* or a *mudrā* and a family of the *Vajradhātu* are different from one another and that the former is only a symbol or a representative of the latter. For example, in the first *pāda* of the verse 5 of the above quotation, *viz.* "*vajraṁ Ḍombī bhaven*", Ḍombī should have remained different from the Vajra-family of the *Vajradhātu* serving merely as a representative of or a substitute for the latter as was indicated by Snellgrove's reconstruction "*Vajre Ḍombī bhaven*". The author of the *Hevajra-tantra*, however, went beyond himself and regarded Ḍombī one and the same with the Vajra-family. When he did, though perhaps not consciously, he no longer placed entire confidence in the Tantric logic of symbolism. He removed the distinction between Ḍombī and the Vajra-family so as to emphasize their essential identity, and through this unnecessary identification he made the relation between the symbol and the symbolized something metaphorical or conventional. It could be assumed that this identification of *mudrās* and the families of the *Vajradhātu* was an accidental slip of the pen. However, the same tendency of taking the efficacy of symbolism only as metaphorical or conventional can be found in the system of consecration peculiar to the *Hevajra-tantra*; that is, the fourth consecration. Consecration is the most essential cult for a Tantrist.

In the *Hevajra-tantra*, the system of consecration is composed of following four kinds of consecrations:

1 *ācārya-abhiṣeka* (阿闍梨灌頂, consecration to become a master)
2 *guhya-abhiṣeha* (秘密灌頂, the secret consecration)

3 *prajñjñāna-abhiṣka* (般若智灌頂, the consecration to acquire *prajñā*-wisdom or acquire wisdom through *prajñā*, a woman)
4 *caturtha-abhiṣeha* (第四灌頂, the fourth consecration)

The first is the usual consecration to become a master. It is also called *kalaśa-abhiṣeka* (the consecration with a pitcher), in which water gathered from the five oceans of the world, symbolizing the five kinds of wisdom (五智) which constitute the *dharmahāya* of Vairocana, *viz. bodhicitta* (the mind of enlightenment), is poured from a pitcher on the top of the head of a disciple so as to implant the five kinds of wisdom within him.

The second is said to be the original consecration of the *Guhyasamāja-tantra*. The master (*ācārya*) who is identified with Vajrasattva ('adamantinebeing' who is both the absolute reality itself and a concrete being) practises sexual *yoga* with a beautiful girl of sixteen years old (*mahāmudrā*, the material aspect of the entire *maṇḍala* and at the same time a woman) who was dedicated to him by the desciple during her menstruation. The master drops the *bodhicitta*, the mixture of his semen (*upāya*) and the menstrual fluid of the girl (*prajñā*), into the mouth of the disciple whose eyes are bound with a cloth, and thus implants the *bodhicitta* within him.

The third is thought to be the original consecration of the Buddhist immigrants to the cult of cemetery, and is performed in conformance with the idea of the structure of the human body, thought to be borrowed from the cult of cemetery.

There are two veins (*nāḍi*) on both sides of the central or spinal vein *Avadhūtī*, *viz. Lalanā*, (left) and *Rasanā* (right). *Lalanā* conveys *prajñā* and *Rasanā* conveys *upāya*. Through the sexual *yoga, bodhicitta*, the mixture of *prajñā* and *upāya*, occurs at the confluence of these two veins. Through yogic practice, the *yogin* makes this *bodhicitta* ascend through the central vein *Avadhūtī*. *Avadhūtī* runs through four *cakras* (similar to nerve centres), *viz. nirmāṇa-cakra*, *dharma-cakra*, *saṁbhoga-cakra* and *mahāsukha-cakra* which are imagined to be located in the navel, in the heart, in the throat and in the head as sixty-four petalled, eight petalled, sixteen petalled and thirty-two petalled respectively. As the *bodhicitta* passes through these four *cakras* in regular succession, the four kinds of pleasures, *viz. ānanda* (usual sexual pleasure), *paramānanda* (the supreme pleasure), *viramānanda* (pleasure no longer sexual) and *sahajānanda* (the innate pleasure) are experienced. The last of these four, which is experienced when the *bodhicitta* attains to the *cakra* in the head, *viz. mahāsukhacakra* (the cakra of the great pleasure) is the great pleasure (*mahāsukha* 大樂) which is an aspect of the ultimate reality and is nothing other than the state of enlightenment.[44] This idea of *mahāsukha* as the state of enlightenment or as an aspect of *dharmahāya* obviously corresponds to the aspect of *ānanda* of *brahman*, the universal reality of Brahmanic Philosophy, which is equipped with three aspects, *viz. sat* (substantiality), *cit* (spirituality) and *ānanda* (pleasure).

In the *prajñājñāna-abhiṣeka*, the master (*ācārya*) makes the disciple practice

in turn sexual yoga with the girl and teaches him the process of promoting *bodhicitta* allowing him experience himself the pleasures of each stage. This process is a homologous miniaturization of the Mahāyānic process of accumulating merits over the period of the three great uncountable aeons.

When the *bodhicitta* of the disciple reaches the *mahāsukha-cakra* located in the head, according to the Tantric logic of symbolism, he should enter in to the sphere of the universal pleasure, or the ultimate state of enlightenment. He should have nothing more to do; still he goes beyond this.

The disciple, having attained the great pleasure through his yogic practice with the girl who was once given to the master, rejoices. He thanks the master heartily and gives him a great amount of honorarium. He even offers him himself as a slave as well as his wife and children, and subsequently asks to receive the fourth consecration. The master, according to the *Saṁpuṭodbhavatantra* "will give him the (precious) consecration like a jewel with nothing but words, which the disciple will realize later" (*vācaiva dadyād abhiṣekaratnam / paścāt svasaṁvedayate sa śiṣyaḥ*[45] //). The fourth consecration is the consecration with words, or Upaniṣadic teaching of the secret expression in the form of maxims.

According to the Tantric way of thinking, there can be no truth which can not be attained through Tantric practice of manipulating symbols. The yogic practice of the third consecration was perfectly successful in symbolyzing the world of reality. It should have convinced the disciple that the pleasure he experienced in the consecration is nothing other than the universal pleasure which is an aspect of the ultimate reality. There should be no further truth to be received through words. Still in the fourth consecration, the truth was to be taught with words. Thus the system of the *Hevajra-tantra* itself betrayed Tantrism. Here, we notice the critical turn, or rather a critical turning back from Tantrism to Mahāyāna Buddhism.

What was the ultimate truth then? Bu ston (1290–1364 A.D.) offers in his *dpal bde mchog sdom pa ḥbyuṅ baḥi dkyil ḥkhor gyi cho ga dri ma med paḥi chu rgyun*,[46] the following sentence, which appears at the end of the *Hevajra-tantra*, as the substance of the fourth consecration:

> *idaṁ jñānaṁ mahāsūkṣmaṁ vajramaṇḍaṁ nabhopamam /*
> *virajaṁ mokṣadaṁ śāntaṁ pitā te tvam asi svayam//* (HV. II. xii. 4.)
> "This wisdom is very subtle; it is the cream of the adamant and is like the empty sky.
> It is free from the dust (of passion), brings about liberation and is tranquil.
> You are your self your own father."[47]

Followers of the *Hevajra-tantra* were betrayed in the last moment in the *Hevajra-tantra* itself through this verse. In time, however, recovering from bewilderment, they again rose from meditation and started on a pilgrimage

attempting to realize this Upaniṣadic, enigmatic remark that "you are yourself your own father". Since the yogic practice of Tantrism was judged as a conventional means only, they had nothing left other than the Mahāyānic practice through which to solve the mystery of this remark. This can be attested to by the fact that the system of pilgrimage places (*pīṭha*) was very quickly consolidated in the short period of transition from the *Hevajra-tantra* to the subsequent *Saṁvarodaya-tantra*.

V. The fate of Tantric Buddhism

i. The theory of pilgrimage places

The practice of pilgrimage did exist in the time of the *Hevajra-tantra*. The followers of the *Hevajra-tantra* actually visited sacred places of the cult of *yoginīs* in quest of a group of *yoginīs* external to them just as the *Vajra-dhātu-maṇḍala* was external to the followers of the *Tattvasaṁgraha-tantra*. They did go on pilgrimages, but pilgrimage itself was not essential for them. If a group of *yoginīs* could have been found nearby, it would have eliminated the need for pilgrimage.

The pilgrimage places (*pīṭha*) and names of countries or cities are enumerated though not systematically in the *Hevajra-tantra* as follows:

"[*vajragarbha uvāca*] /
he bhagavan he te melāpakasthānāḥ //
bhagavān āha /
pīṭhañ copapīṭhañ ca kṣetrañ copakṣetram eva ca /
chandohañ copacchandohaṁ melāpakopamelāpakam tathā //10//
pīlavopapīlavañ caiva śmaśānopaśmaśnañ ca /
ętā dvādaśabhūmayaḥ /
daśabhūmīśvaro nātha ebhir anyair na hathyate //11//
[*vajragarbha uvāca*] /
he bhagavan he te pīṭhādayaḥ //
bhagavān āha
pīṭhaṁ jālandharaṁ khyātam oḍiyānaṁ tathaiva ca /
pīṭhaṁ pūrṇagiriś caiva kāmarūpaṁ tathaiva ca //12//
upapīṭhaṁ mālavam prohtaṁ sindhur nagaram eva ca /
kṣetraṁ munmuni khyātaṁ hṣetraṁ kāuṇyapāṭakam /
devīhoṭaṁ tathā kṣetraṁ kṣetraṁ karmārapāṭakam //13//
upakṣetraṁ hulatā proktam arbudañ ca tathaiva ca /
godāvarī himādriś ca upalṣetrañ ca saṁkṣepata //14//
chandohaṁ harikelañ ca lavanasāgaramadhyajam /
lampākaṁ kāñcikañ caiva saurāṣṭrañ ca tathaiva ca //15//
kaliṅgam upacchandohaṁ dvīpañ cāmīkarānvitam /
kokaṇañ copacchandohaṁ samāsenābhidhīyate //16//
pīlavaṁ grāmāntasthaṁ pīlavaṁ nagarasya ca /

caritraṁ hośalañ caiva vindhyā kaumārapaurikā /
upapilavaṁ tatsanniveśaṁ vajragarbha mahākṛpa //17//
śmaśānaṁ pretasamhātaṁ śmaśānaṁ codadhes taṭaḥ /
udyānaṁ vāpikātīram upaśmaśānaṁ nigadyate //18//[48]

In this passage, the list of ten kinds of *pīṭhas* and places which correspond to them is as follows:

1 *pīṭha*: a. Jālandhara b. Oḍiyāna c. Paurṇagiri d. Kāmarūpa
2 *upapīṭha*: a. Mālava b. Sindhu c. Nagara
3 *kṣetra*: a. Munmuni b. Kāruṇyapāṭaka c. Devikoṭa d. Kārmārapāṭaka
4 *upakṣetra*: a. Kulatā b. Arbuda c. Godāvarī d. Himādri
5 *chandoha*: a. Harikera b. (the place) arisen in the middle of the salt-ocean c. Lampāka d. Kāñcika e. Saurāṣṭra
6 *upacchandoha*: Kaliṅga b. the island of gold c. Kokaṇa
7 *pīlava*: a. (the place) on the boundary of the village b. (the place on the boundary) of the city c. Caritra d. Kośala e. Vindyā f. Kaumārapaurikā
8 *upapīlava*: a. (the place) near to it
9 *śmaśāna*: a. (the place) where dead spirits haunt b. the ocean-shore
10 *upaśmaśāna*: a. the garden b. the shore of the pool

Here, *melāpaka* and *upamelāpaka* which appeared in verse 10 were eliminated. Some of these names of places appear to be imaginary or to be mere modifiers; the number of these places is difficult to determine. However, in the *Saṁvarodaya-tantra* which follows the *Hevajra-tantra*, the system of the places of pilgrimage has been consolidated firmly as is shown in the following passage of the chapter 9 of the *tantra*:

madyamāṁsapriyā nityaṁ lajjābhayanāśanī ca yā /
ḍākinīkhulasaṁbhūtāḥ sahajā iti hathyate /
deśe deśe 'bhijāyante yoginiḥ sevayet sadā //12//
pīṭhopapīṭhakṣetropakṣetracchandohopacchandohamelāpakopa
melāpakam /
śmaśānañ copaśmaśānañ ca jambudvīpe vyavasthitāḥ //13//
pīṭhaṁ pūrṇagirau khyātaṁ pīṭhaṁ jālandharaṁ tathā /
oḍiyānaṁ tathā pīṭhaṁ pīṭham arbudam eva ca //14//
godāvary upapīṭaṁ syāt tathā rāmeśvarā dvayam /
devīkoṭābhidhānañ ca mālavañ copapīṭhaham //15//
kāmarūpaṁ dvyaṁ kṣetram oḍrakṣetrābhidhānakam /
triśakuny upakṣetraṁ syāt hosalaś copakṣetrakam //16//
kaliṅgalaṁpākayoś ca cchandohañ ca tathaiva ca /
kāñcihā copacchandohaṁ himālaya viśeṣataḥ //17//
pretādhivāsinī melā gṛhadevatam eva ca /
saurāṣṭre suvarṇadvīpe ca upamelāpakadvayam //18//

śmaśānaṁ pāṭalīputram śmaśānaṁ sindhum cva ca /
marukulatādvayasthānam upaśmaśāna kathyate //19//.
bāhyapīṭhan tathā khyātam adhyātmaṁ deham ucyate /
suadehe nāḍikārūpaṁ pīṭhanāmeti kīrtilam //20//
tadrūpaṁ devalākāraṁ tenādhyātmavyavasthitiḥ /
tena tatpiṇḍamayaṁ dehaṁ sarvabuddhasamo hy asau //21//
pīṭham pramuditā bhūmir upapīṭhaṁ vimalā tathā /
kṣetram prabhākarī bhumir arciṣmaty upakṣetrakam //22//
chandoho 'bhimukhī jñeyopacchandohaḥ sudurjayā /
dūraṅgameti melā syād acalākhyopamelakam //23//
śmaśānam sādhumatī caiva dharmameghopaśmaśānakam /
bhūmipīṭhādisaṁśuddhim kathayāmi yathākramam //24//
pīṭhopapīṭhasevanān nirmalo bhavati mānavaḥ /
bhraman nimittaṁ saṁlakṣya nirvikalpena dhīmatāḥ //25//[19]

"A woman who is always fond of meat and spirituous liquors and forgets shame and fear is said to be an 'innate woman' born of the *ḍākinī* family. They are born in each district; (these) *yoginīs* should be worshipped at all times (12).

(The places of pilgrimage, that is,) *pīṭha* ('the seat'), *upapīṭha* ('the subsidiary seat'), *kṣetra* ('the field'), *upakṣetra* ('the subsidiary field'), *chandoha*, *upacchandoha*, *melāpaka* ('the meeting-place'), *upamelāpaka* ('the subsidiary meeting-place'), *śmaśāna* ('the cemetery') and *upaśmaśāna* ('the subsidiary cemetery') are located in *Jambudvipa* (13).

(Name of places corresponding to these places of pilgrimage is as follows:)
1 *pīṭha*: a. Pūrṇagiri b. Jālandhara c. Oḍiyāna d. Arbuda (14)
2 *upapīṭha*: a. Godāvari b. Rāmeśvarī c. Devīkoṭa d. Mālava (15)
3 *kṣetra*: a. Kāmarūpa b. Oḍra
4 *upakṣetra*: a. Triśakunī b. Kośala (16)
5 *chandoha*: a. Kaliṅga b. Laṁpāka
6 *upacchandoha*: a. Kāñcī b. Himālaya (17)
7 *melāpaka*: a. Pretādhivāsinī b. Gṛhadevatā
8 *upamelāpaka*: a. Saurāṣṭra b. Svarṇadvīpa (18)
9 *śmaśāna*: a. Pāṭaliputra b. Sindhu
10 *upaśmaśāna* a. Maru b. Kulatā (19)

Thus, the external *pīṭhas* (*bāhyapīṭha* are told; the internal (*adhyātmapīṭha*) is said to be (the *pīṭha* which exists in) the body. It is said that the 'abode' of a vein in one's own body has the name *pīṭha* (20). Its form has the aspect of a deity, (*viz.* a *ḍākinī*); for this reason, it is established as the internal (*pīṭha*). For this reason, the body consists of the 'lump' of them; he (who has this body) is equal to (the aggregate of) all the *buddhas* (21).

pīṭha is the (first) stage (of *bodhisattvas* called) *Pramuditā* ('joyful').
upapīṭha is (the second stage) *Vimalā* ('immaculate').

kṣetra is the (third) stage Prabhākarī ('radiant').
upakṣetra is (the fourth stage) *Arciṣmatī* ('flaming') (22).
chandoha is (the sixth stage) *Abhimukhī* ('confronted').
upacchandoha is (the fifth stage) *Sudurjayā* ('invincible').
melāpaha is (the seventh stage) *Dūrañgamā* ('far-going').
upamelāpaka is (the eighth stage) *Acalā* ('immovable') (23).
śmaśāna is (the ninth stage) *Sādhumatī* ('successful').
upaśmaśāna is (the tenth stage) Dharmameghā ('the cloud of truth').

I will speak of the purification of *pīṭhas* and so on (, that is, the ten) stages (of *bodhisattvas*) in due order (24).
By resorting to (the places of) *pīṭhas* or *upapīṭas*, one can become stainless. Wandering (amid these places) and observing (their) features, he will become wise and be free from imaginary ideas (25)."[50]

In the correspondence of ten *pīṭhas* and the ten stages of *bodhisattvas* (菩薩十地), and especially in the last part of this passage (verses 22–25), we can discern the original image of 'the theory of external *pīṭhas*'. Practicers are imagined to have done pilgrimage from one *pīṭha* to another with the consciousness that they were walking through the Mahāyānic process of purifying mind by degrees, if symbolically. Pilgrimage itself was their aim. According to the Mahāyānic ideal, they hoped to be able to purify themselves through pilgrimage. At the same time, according to the Tantric ideal, they hoped to be able to personally testify to the Tantric formula of attaining perfection (*siddhi* 悉地) quickly through the Mahāyānic idea of performing difficult deeds. Thus, the followers of the *Saṁvarodaya-tantra* came to be alternating practicers of both pilgrimage and meditation.

However, this Mahāyānic idea of going on pilgrimage to 'external *pīṭhas*', though already a deed symbolic of the Mahāyānic performance of "difficult deed" (*duḥkara* 難行) in its true sense of the word, was almost simultaneously replace with the Tantric idea of 'internal *pīṭhas*' as is shown in the following passage found in chapter 7 of the same text:

athātaḥ saṁpravakṣyàmi nāḍicakra yathākramam /
dvāsaptatisahasrāṇi nāḍi dehānugā bhavet //1//
nāḍikā upanāḍīnāṁ tāsāṁ sathānasamāśritāḥ/
viṁśottataśatam nāma nāḍīprādhānyam ucyate //2//
nāḍīsthānañ ca pīṭhañ ca caturviṁśatpramāṇataḥ /
teṣāṁ madhye trayo nāḍya āśrayanti ca sarvagāḥ //3//
pullīramalaye śirasi nakhadantavahā sthitā /
jālandharaśikhāsthāne heśaromasamāvahā //4//
oḍiyāne dakṣiṇe harṇe nāḍī tvaṅmalavāhinī /
arbude pṛṣṭhavaṁśe tu nāḍī piśitavāhinī //5//
godāvarīvāmakarṇe nāḍi snāyuvāhīnī /
rāmeśvare bhruvo madhye asthi vahati sarvadā //6//

devīkoṭe sthitā cakṣau nāḍi bukkavāhinī /
mālave skandhadvayasthāne nāḍī hṛdayavāhinī //7//
kāmarukakṣayoḥ sthāne cakṣur vahati sarvadā /
auḍre stanayugale nāḍi pittavahā sadā //8//
nābhau stiśakunisaṁsthāne nāḍī phupphusāvahā /
kosale nāsikāgre tu antramālāvahā sthitā //9//
mukhasthāne haliṅge tu gudavartiḥ sadā sthitā /
laṁpāke haṇṭhadeśe tu nāḍy udaravahā sadā //10//
kāñcihṛdayasthāne tu nāḍī viḍvāhinī /
himālaye meḍhrasthāne nāḍī sīmāntamadhyagā //11//
pretādhivāsinīliṅge nāḍī śleṣmavāhini /
gṛhadevatāgudasthāne sāmānyaṁ pūyavāhinī //12//
saurāṭṣra ūruyugale śoṇitāñ ca sadā vahā /
suvarṇadvīpe jaṁghāsthāne nāḍī prasvedavāhinī //13//
nagare pādāṅgulau jñeyā nāḍī medavahā sadā /
sindhau pādapṛṣṭhasthāne aśru vahati rūpiṇī //14//
marāv aṅguṣṭhayoḥ sthāne kheṭaṁ vahati sarvadā /
kulatājānudvayoḥ sthitvā bālasaṁhānavāhinī //15//[51]

"Now, I will explain the circle of veins in due order. Veins circulating in the body are seventy-two thousand (1).

Veins rely on the abodes of these subsidiary veins. One hundred and twenty (veins) are said to be the principal veins (2).

The abode of veins, (that is,) 'the seats' (*pīṭha*) are twenty-four in number; in the middle of them dwell three veins; they are omnipresent (3).

In *Pullīramalaya*, (that is,) the head exists (a vein) flowing through fingernails and teeth. In the abode of the top of the head, (that is,) *Jālandhara*, there exists (a vein which) flows through the hair of the head and body (4).

In *Oḍiyāna*, (that is,) the right ear, a vein flows through the skin and dirt; and in *Arbuda*, (that is,) the back-bone, a vein flows through the flesh (5).

In *Godāvarī*, (that is,) the left ear, a vein flows through the muscle. Among the eyebrows, (that is,) *Rāmeśvara*, (a vein) always flows through bones (6).

A vein existing in *Devīkoṭa*, (that is,) the eyes flows through the liver. In *Mālava*, (that is,) the abode of both shoulders is the vein flowing through the heart (7).

In the abode of *Kāmaru*, (that is,) the two armpits, (a vein) always flows through the eyes. In *Oḍra*, (that is,) the two breasts a vein always conveys bile (8).

In the navel, (that is,) the abode of *Triśakuni*, a vein flows through the lungs. In *Kośala*, (that is,) the top of the nose exists a vein flowing through the wreath of entrails (9).

In the abode of mouth, (that is,) *Kaliṅga*, always exists (a vein) moving in the rectum. In *Laṁpāka*, that is, the abode of the throat, the vein is always flowing through the stomach (10).

In *Kāñci*, the abode of the heart, a vein conveys faeces. In *Himālaya*, the abode of penis, a vein goes to the middle of the parting of the hair (11).

In *Pretādhivāsinī*, (that is,) the *liṅga*, the vein conveys phlegm. In the abode of rectum, (that is,) *Gṛhadevatā* is (a vein) always conveying purulent matter (12).

In *Saurāṣṭra*, (that is,) the both thighs a vein always conveys blood.

In *Suvarṇadvīpa*, (that is,) the abode of the shank, a vein conveys sweat (13).

In *Nagara*, (that is,) the toe, a vein is known to be always conveying fat. In Sindhu, the abode of the instep, (the vein) *Rūpiṇī* conveys tears (14).

In *Maru*, the abode of both thumbs, a vein conveys phlegm at all times. Existing in *Kulatā*, (that is,) the two knees, (a vein) always conveys snivel (15)."[52]

Here, the correspondence between each of twenty-four *pīṭhas*, that is, twenty-four parts of the body and twenty-four humours or internal organs is shown. We can reconstruct the idea of 'the internal *pīṭhas*' on the basis of verses 20 and 21 of above-mentioned chapter 9 as follows:

'Internal *pīṭhas*' are abodes of veins (*nāḍīsthāna*, VII.3.) as 'external *pīṭhas*' are abode of *ḍākinīs*. They are twenty-four parts of a body such as "the head" corresponding to the external *pīṭha* Pullīramalaya (VII.4.) etc.. There are twenty-four veins (*nāḍī*) which rely on these internal *pīṭhas* such as "(a vein) flowing through fingernails and teeth" (*nakhadantavadā*, VII.4.) etc.. These veins (*nāḍī*) are regarded as deities (*devatā*, IX.21.), that is, *ḍākinīs*. A *nāḍī* is nothing other than a *ḍākinī* as is shown exceptionally in the case of *Rūpiṇī* (VII.14.). A human body is composed of these twenty-four 'internal *pīṭhas*" such as "the head" (VII.4.) etc. as the world, that is, the *Jambūdvīpa* in this case, is composed of twenty-four 'external *pīṭhas*' i.e. twenty-four countries such as *Pullīramalaya* etc. An 'internal *pīṭha*' is existent as long as it is an abode of a vein. A vein in turn is existent as long as it conveys a humour in it or it flows in an internal organ. Therefore, if one makes twenty-four veins of one's own body active, through yogic practice of making each of humours flow through the corresponding veins or each of veins flow through the corresponding internal organs, he transforms his body into an aggregate of internal *pīṭhas* or an aggregate of *ḍākinīs*, a homologous miniaturization of the world as an aggregate of external *pīṭhas* or an aggregate of *ḍākinīs* (*ḍākinījāla*). Thus, he can unite himself with the ultimate reality on the basis of the Tantric logic of symbolism.

ii. The structure of the Saṁvara-maṇḍala

The theory of internal *pīṭhas* is brought to completion in the *Vajraḍāka-tantra* which succeeds to the *pīṭha* theory of the *Saṁpuṭodbhava-tantra*.[53] We would like to show the latter half of chapter 14 of the *Vajraḍāka-tantra*, the first half of which corresponds with the last part of *kalpa* II. *prakaraṇa* I of the *Saṁpuṭodbhava-tantra* and shows the correspondence between each of twenty-four external pīṭhas and twenty-four internal *pīṭhas*:

eṣu sthāneṣu yāḥ kanyā nāḍīrūpena saṁsthitāḥ /
ity āha bhagavān vajrī vajradākaḥ yathāparam //14//
sarvavīrasamtāyogaḍākinījālasaṁvaram /
kathayāmi samāsena tan me nigaditaṁ śṛṇu //15//
pullīramalaye khaṇḍakapālinaḥ pracaṇḍā nakhadantāvahā /
jārandhare mahākaṁkālacaṇḍāhṣī heśaromāvahā //16//
oḍiyāne kaiṅkālaprabhāvatī tvaṅmalāvahā /
arbude vikaṭadaṁṣṭriṇā mahānāsā piśitāvahā / *pīṭha* //17//
godāvaryāṁ suravairiṇavīramati nahāruhā vahati sarvadā /
rāmeśvare amitābhakharparī asthimālāvahā //18//
devikoṭe vajraprabhalaṅkeśvarī bukkaṁ vahati nityaśaḥ /
mālave vajradehadrumacchāyā hṛdmaṇḍalāvahā //19//
ity evaṁ kathitan devi cittacakrasya khecarī
samāpattyā vyavasthitā //20//
kāmarūpe aṅkurika-airāvatī cakṣur vahati sā nityam /
oḍre vajrajaṭilamahābhairavā pittāvahā prakīrtitā / *kṣetra* //21//
triśkunau mahāvīravāyuvegā sā phupphusāvahā /
kośale vajrahūṁkārasurābhakṣī antramālāvahā / *upakṣetra* //22//
kaliṅge subhadraśyāmadevī pārśvatas tu samākhyātā /
laṁpāke vajrabhadrasubhadrā udaram vahati garddabhī / *chandoha* //23//
kāñcyāṁ bhairavahayakarṇā viṣṭāvaha prakīrtitā /
himālaye virūpākṣakhagānanā sīmāntasya madhyagā vyavasthitā / *upacchandoha* //24//
vākcakrasya bhūcarī samāpattyā vyavasthitā //25//
pretādhivāsini mahābalacakravegā śleṣmaṁ vahati sarvadā /
gṛhadevatāyāṁ ratnavajrakhaṇḍarohā pūyaṁ vahati nityaśaḥ //26//
saurāṣṭre hayagrīvaśauṇḍinī raktavahā prakīrtitā /
suvarṇadvīpe ākāśagarbhacakravarmiṇī prasvedavahā tathā /
melāpakopamelāpakam matam //27//
nagare mārārisuvīrā medavahā /
sindhudeśe padmanarteśuvaramahābalā aśru vahati nityaśaḥ śaśāna //28//
marau vairocanacakravartinī kheṭāvahā prakīrtitā /
kulatāyāṁ vajrasattvamahāvīryā bālasiṁhānāvāhini / *upaśmaśāna* //29//

kāyacakrasya bāhyapātālavāsinī samāpattyā vyavasthitā //30//
ity āha bhagavān vajrī vajrasattvas tathāgathḥ /
sarvaḍākinīsamāyogavajraḍākaḥ paraṁ sukham //31//[54]

" 'In these places (of pilgrimage), the girls are abiding in the forms of veins.' Thus said the Reverend Lord, the holder of an adamant, Vajraḍāka.

'I will tell you summarily the supreme pleasure (*saṁvara*) (which is to be realized) in the group of *ḍākinīs* perfectly united with all the heroes. Listen to what is said by me (15).

In *Phullīramalaya*, there exists Pracaṇḍā, (the consort) of Khaṇḍakapālin, flowing through fingernails and teeth.

In *Jālandhara*, there exists Caṇḍākṣī (united) with Mahākaṁkāla flowing through the hair of the head and body (16).

In *Oḍiyāna*, Prabhāvatī (united) with Kaṁkāla flows through the skin and dirt.

In *Arbuda*, Mahānāsā, together with Vikaṭadaṁṣṭrin flows through the flesh. (These four places are) *pīṭhas* (17).

In Godāvarī, Vīramati (united) with Suravairiṇa always flows through *nahāruhā* (?).

In *Rāmeśvara*, Kharparī (united) with Amitābha flows through the wreath of bones (18).

In *Devikoṭa*, Laṅkeśvarī (united) with Vajraprabha flows through the liver.

In *Mālava, Drumacchāyā* (united) with Vajradeha flows through the *maṇḍala* of the heart (19).

Thus what was said is, O Goddess, the aerial girls, who are belonging to the wheel of mind, abiding in union (with their male partners) (20).

In *Kāmarūpa*, Airāvatī (united) with Aṅkurika exists. (As a vein), she always flows through the eyes.

In *Oḍra*, there exists Mahābhairavā (united) with Vajrajaṭila. She is said to be (the vein) conveying bile. (These two are) *hṣetras* (21)

In Triśakuni, there exists Vāyuvegā (united) with Mahāvīra. (As a vein) she flows through the lungs.

In *Kośala*, there exists Surābhakṣī, (united) with Vajrahūṁkāra, flowing through the wreath of entrails. (These are) *upakṣetras* (22).

In *Kaliṅga*, there exists Śyāmadevī (united) with Subhadra. (She is) said to be (the vein flowing) through the place of the ribs.

In *Laṁpāka*, there exists Subhadrā (united) with Vajrabhadra. (As a vein, she is) Garddabhi flowing through the stomach. (These are) *chandohas* (23).

In Kāñcī, there exists Hayakarṇā (united) with Bhairava. (She is) said to be (the vein) conveying faeces.

In *Himālaya*, there exists Khagānanā, (united) with Virūpākṣa, going to the middle of the parting of the hair. (These are) *upacchando-has* (24).

(Thus) exist girls inhabiting on the earth (*bhūcarī*), who are belonging to the wheel of speech, being in union (with their male partners) (25).

In *Pretādhivāsin*, there exists Cakravegā (united) with Mahābala. She always conveys phlegm.

In *Gṛhadevatā*, there exists Khaṇḍarohā (united) with Ratnavajra. She always conveys purulent matter (26).

In *Saurāṣṭra*, there exists-Śauṇḍinī (united) with Hayagrīva. (She is) said to be (the vein) conveying blood.

In *Suvarṇadvīpa*, there exists Cakravarmiṇī, (united) with Ākaśagarbha, conveying sweat. (These are) *melāpakas* and *upamelā-pakas* (27).

In *Nagara*, there exists Suvīrā, (united) with Mārāri, conveying fat.

In *Sindhu*, There exists Mahābalā (united) with Padmanarteśvara. (As a vein, she) always conveys tears. (These are) *śmaśānas* (28).

In Maru, there exists Cakravartinī (united) with Vairocana. (She is) said to be (the vein) conveying phlegm.

In Kulatā, there exists Mahāvīryā, (united) with Vajrasattva, convey-ing snivel. (These are) *upaśmaśānas* (29).

(Thus) exist girls inhabiting in the outer (of the three layers consti-tuting the outer circle of the *maṇḍala*, that is), the region under the earth, who are belonging to the wheel of body, abiding in union (with their male partners) (30).'

Thus, said the Reverend Lord, the holder of an adamant, the Adamantine-being, *tathāgata*, Vajraḍāka in perfect union with all the *ḍākinīs*, the Supreme Pleasure."

In this passage, we find all the elements constituting the outer circle of the *Saṁvara-maṇḍala* of sixty-two deities, the names and positions of which are as follows:

I. The Inner Circle.

1. Heruka	2. Vajravārāhī	the pericarp of the central lotus
3. Ḍākinī		the east petal of the central lotus
4. Lāmā		the south petal
5. Khaṇḍalohā		the west petal
6. Rūpiṇī		the north petal

II. The Outer Circle.

i. *Ḍākinīs* in the Sky.		The Wheel of Mind (the inner layer).
7. Khaṇḍakapāla	8. Pracaṇḍā	east spoke (Phullīramalaya)

9. Mahākaṅkāla	10. Caṇḍākṣī	north spoke (Jālandhara)
11. Kaṅkāla	12. Prabhāvatī	west spoke (Oḍīyāna)
13. Vikaṭadaṁṣṭra	14. Mahānāsā	south spoke (Arbuda)
15. Suravairiṇa	16. Vīramati	southest spoke (Godāvarī)
17. Amitābha	18. Kharparī	southwest spoke (Rāmeśvara)
19. Vajraprabha	20. Laṅkeśvarī	northwest spoke (Devikoṭa)
21. Vajradeha	22. Drumacchāyā	northeast spoke (Mālava)
ii. *Ḍākinīs* on the Earth.		The Wheel of Speech (the middle layer).
23. Aṅkurika	24. Airāvatī	east spoke (Kāmarūpa)
25. Vajrajaṭila	26. Mahābhairavī	north spoke (Oḍra)
27. Mahābala	28. Vāyuvegā	west spoke (Triśakuni)
29. Vajrahūṁkāra	30. Surābhakṣī	south spoke (Kosala)
31. Subhadra	32. Śyāmadevī	southeast spoke (Kaliṅga)
33. Vajrabhadra	34. Subhadrā	southwest spoke (Laṁaka)
35. Mahābhairava	36. Hayakarṇā	northwest spoke (Kāñcī)
37. Virūpākṣa	38. Khagānanā	northeast spoke (Himālaya)
iii. *Ḍākinīs* under the Earth.		The Wheel of Body (the outer layer).
39. Mahābala	40. Cakravegā	east spoke (Pretapuri)
41. Ratnavajra	42. Khaṇḍarohā	north spoke (Gṛhadevatā)
43. Hayagrīva	44. Śauṇḍinī	west spoke (Saurāṣṭra)
45. Ākāśagarbha	46. Cakravarmiṇī	south spoke (Suvarṇadvīpa)
47. Heruka	48. Suvīrā	southeast spoke (Nagara)
49. Padmanarteśvara	50. Mahābalā	southwest (Sindhu)
51. Vairocana	52. Cakravartinī	northwest (Maru)
53. Vajrasattva	54. Mahāvīryā	northeast (Kulatā)

III. Guardians.

55. Kākāsyā	east gate
56. Ulūkāsyā	north gate
57. Śvānāsyā	west gate
58. Sūkarāsyā	south gate
59. Yamadṛḍhī	southeast corner
60. Yamadūtī	southwest corner
61. Yamadaṁṣṭrī	northwest corner
62. Yamamathanī	northeast corner

The *Saṁvara-maṇḍala* thus completes itself by incorpolating twenty-four *ḍākinīs* each of which are united with their male partners (*ḍāhas*). We should describe it the most properly by overlapping the three *maṇḍalas* of the body, speech and mind described separately in chapter four, five and six of the *Abhidhānottarottara-tantra* which follows the *Vajraḍāka-tantra* as follows:

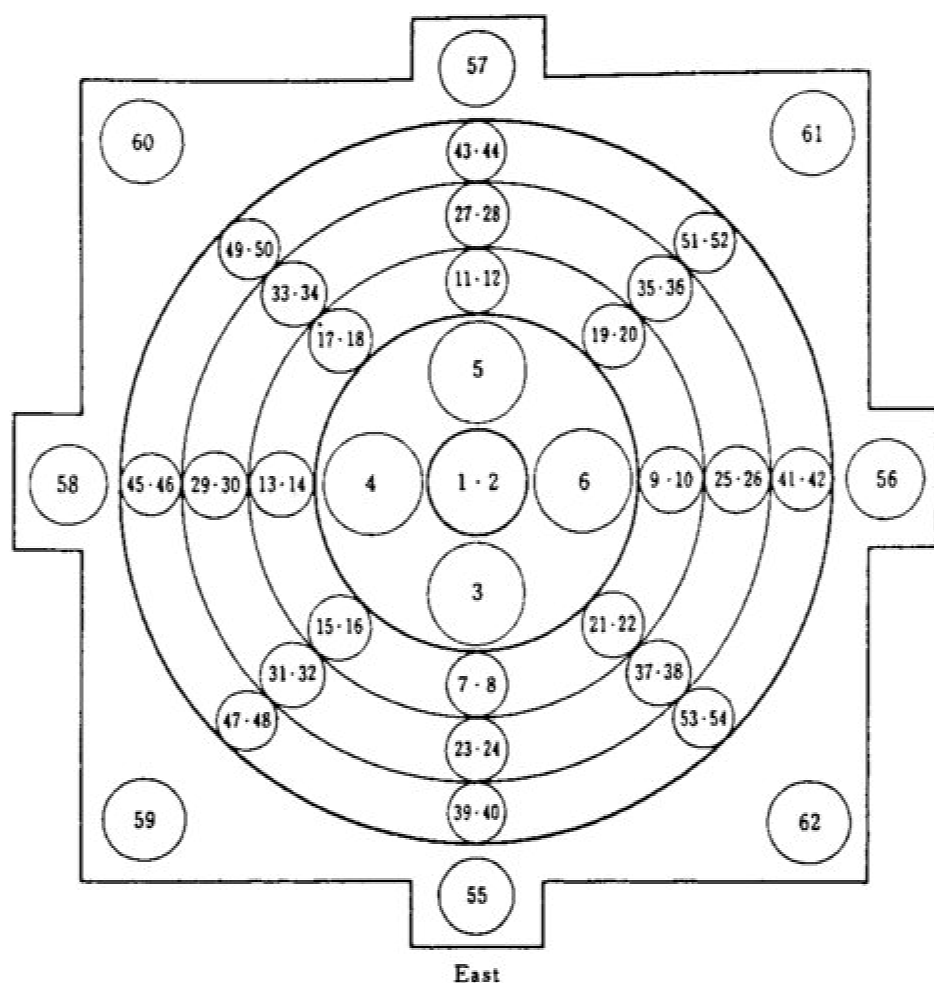


Fig. 5

These *ḍākas* or heroes (*vīra*) constituting the outer circle of the *Saṁvaramaṇḍala* were originally pilgrims in the process of purifying themselves. Therefore, the outer circle composed of three layers in the region which corresponds to the outer nine layers of the *maṇḍala* of the *Vairocanābhi-saṁbodhi-sūtra* (fig. 1) or the outer circle (B) of fig. 2 which is the region of people who are on the process of accumulating merits.

The inner circle of the *maṇḍala* of the *Vairocanābhisaṁbodhi-sūtra* was adopted by the *Vajradhātu-maṇḍala* of the *Tattvasaṁgraha-tantra* (see fig. 2). The *Hevajra-tantra* adopted the *Vajradhātu-maṇḍala* replacing the five families of the former with five *yoginīs*. The inner circle of the *Saṁvara-maṇḍala* is simply the *maṇḍala* of the *Hevajra-tantra*; and now we find that the outer circle of the *maṇḍala* of the *Vairocanābhisaṁbodhi-sūtra* which had been rejected by the *Tattvasaṁgraha-tantra* was restored here as the outer circle of the *Saṁvara-maṇḍala* (fig. 6).

In the *Saṁvara-maṇḍala*, the inner circle is the *maṇḍala* of the religion of sitting meditators and the outer circle is the *maṇḍala* of the religion of pilgrims. The form of the *Saṁvara-maṇḍala* apparently suggests that the two antithetical elements of Tantric Buddhism, *viz.* the Mahāyānic ideal of difficult deeds and the Tantric logic of the quick attainment of enlightenment were successfully

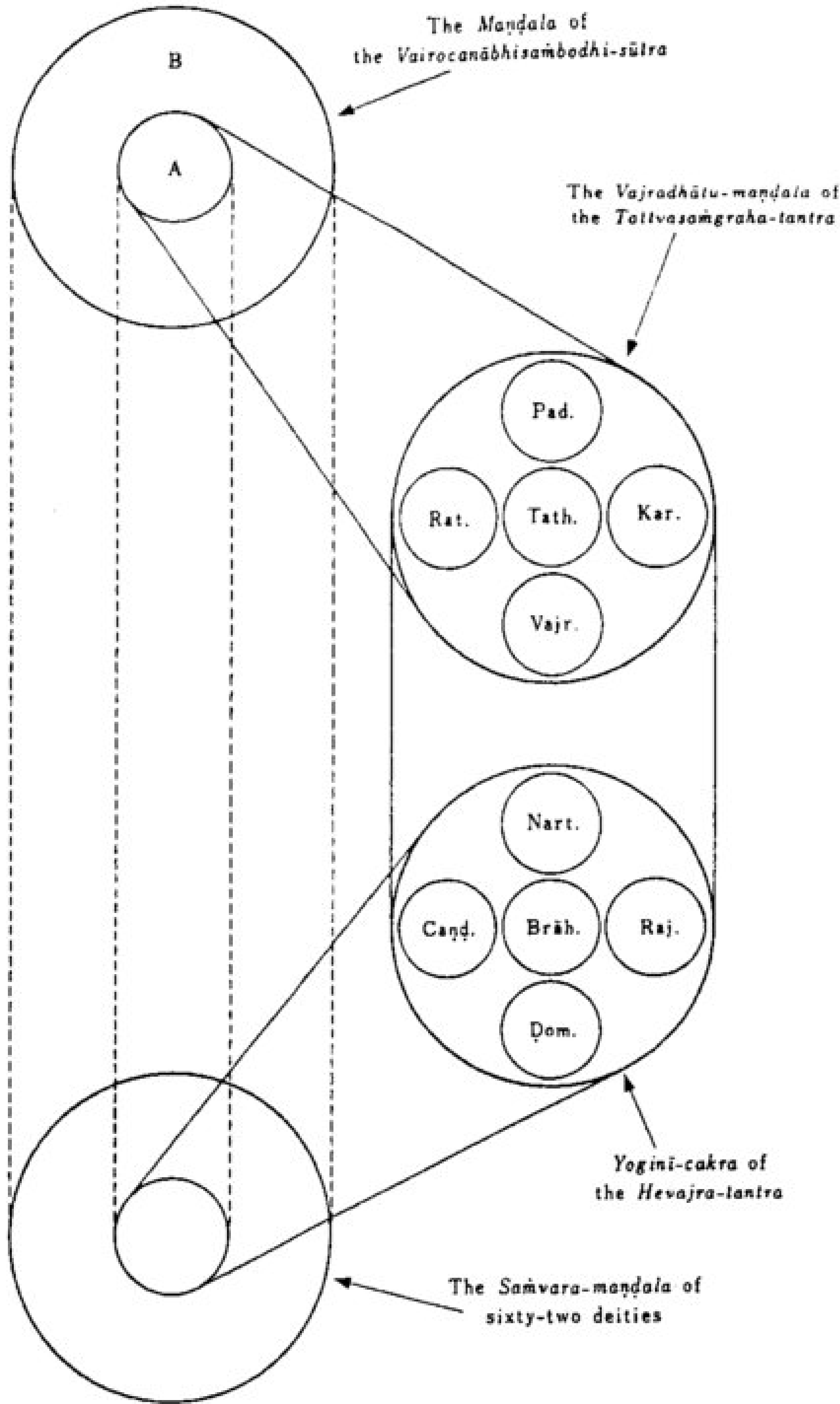


Fig. 6

synthesized in the religion of the *Saṁvara* literature. In order to judge whether this assumption is correct or not, we must examine the structure of the *Saṁvara-maṇḍala* once again.

iii. The 'critical' character of the Saṁvara *Tantrism*

The outer circle of the *Saṁvara-maṇḍala* had not been formed before the theory of the internal *pīṭhas* was completed. The aggregate of twenty-four *ḍākinīs* united with twenty four *ḍākas* was a complete world in itself. It had ceased to be the *maṇḍala* of pilgrims when it was incorporated into the *maṇḍala* of the *Saṁvarodaya-tantra* composed of fourteen deities which was essentially the

same as that of the *Hevajra-tantra* of sixteen deities. Therefore, the outer and the inner circles of *Saṁvara-maṇḍala* represent two different *maṇḍalas* of the religion of meditators which can function independently. This *maṇḍala* itself does not necessarily show that the two antithetical elements of Tantric Buddhism, *viz.* the Mahāyānic ideal of accumulating merits and the Tantric logic of *yoga* were successfully synthesized within it.

However, it has become apparent that the true problem does not exist in the fact that these two elements were synthesized. In reality, they did not have to be synthesized at all. Now it is apparent that the problem consists in the fact that the followers of the *Saṁvara* Tantrism, who were essentially Tantrists, retaining the Mahāyānic idea of the truth adopted from the fourth consecration of the *Hevajra-tantra*, rejected the Mahāyānic practice needed for realizing the Mahāyānic truth.

The idea of the fourth consecration, which teaches the Mahāyānic idea of the truth, was accepted in the *Saṁvara* Tantrism at all times. In the *Tattvasaṁgraha-tantra*, there were no methaphysical or philosophical arguments about the abstruct truth discussed. Arguments of this kind were not necessary for the followers of the *tantra* as they could unite themselves with the truth itself instantly. In the *Hevajra-tantra*, there is an independent chapter which argues about the nature of truth, *viz. Tattvapaṭalaḥ pañcamaḥ*. However, its contents were not the arguments about abstract, philosophical problems as we can see it from the passage we quoted above (see p. 209). In the *Saṁvara* literature, each text has an independent chapter about the nature of truth, such as chapter 29 of the *Saṁvarodaya-tantra*: *Tattvanirdeśa-paṭala*, chapter 69 of the *Abhidhānottarottara-tantra*: *Tattvapaṭala, kalpa* II, *prakaraṇa* i of the *Saṁpuṭodbhava-tantra*: *Nirākāṅkṣatattvopadeśabhāvanā-prakaraṇa*, the first chapter of the *Vajraḍāka-tantra*: *Paramatattvāvalokaviṣayāvatārajñāna-paṭala* etc. in which it attempts to express the truth itself with words.

This tendency in the *Saṁvara* literature of betraying Tantrism may be symbolically indicated with following quotations: one is from abovementioned chapter of the *Saṁvarodaya-tantra* (abbrev. SU) and the other from abovementioned *prakaraṇa* of the *Saṁpuṭodbhava-tantra*. These were referred to by Bu ston in his abovementioned work together with the quotation from the *Hevajra-tantra* we have discussed (see p. 215) as the contents of the fourth consecration. The passage from the *Saṁvarodaya-tantra* is as follows (SU. XXIX.):[55]

nīrūpaṁkṛtam ānandaḥ svayambhūr udayati asau /
tathācittatayā cittam ekaviśvāvabodhakam //10//
bhāvābhāvavivekatāvirahito yatra svayaṁ rājate /
sāndrānandamayaḥ prabodhamahimā vyomāntaravyāpakaḥ /
nānākāravisāri nirmalatayādarśasuphrad maṇḍalam /
prāyaḥ sarvasukhālayaḥ sa sahajānandaś caturthākyayā //11//
nātra prajñā na copāyaḥ samyaktattvāvabodhakaḥ /
yoginyaḥ kalpanāḥ sarvā maṇḍalaṁ bhuvanatrayam //12//

"And likewise, (this *saṁvara*, the supreme pleasure as the ultimate reality) is not the spiritual being and (at the same time) is the spirit itself. It is the complete one who awakens (10).

Here, (in the supreme pleasure, the Lord Heruka,) who is free from diffusive imaginations as to whether he exists or does not exist, shines forth of himself. He is composed of intense pleasure, great in making people awaken and spreading throughout the entire sky. He is (at the same time nothing other than) the *maṇḍala* which is making various kinds of appearances and shining like a mirror because of its stainlessness. In short, he (the Lord Heruka) is the abode of all the pleasure and is, in the fourth name, the innate joy (11).

Here, there is neither *prajñā* nor *upāya*. He makes (living beings) awaken to the right truth. All the diffusive imaginations are (nothing other than all) the *yoginīs* (situated in this *maṇḍala*). The three worlds are nothing other than the *maṇḍala* (12.)"

The quotation from the *Saṁpuṭodbhava-tantra* (SPU.II.i.) is:

> *svasaṁvedyaṁ bhaved jñānaṁ parasaṁvittivarjitam* /
> *khasamaṁ virajaṁ śūnyaṁ bhāvābhāvātmakaṁ param* //41//
> *prajñopāyasaṁbhūtaṁ rāgavirāgamiśritam* /
> *sa eva prāṇināh prāṇaḥ sa eva paramākṣaraḥ* //42//
> *sarvavyрāpī sa cvāsau sa eva tu śrīherukaḥ* /
> *bhāvābhāvau tadudbhūtāv anyāni yāni tāni ca* //43//

> "The wisdom (which is the mind of enlightenment) is recognizable only by one's self. It it free from perception by others. It is equal to the empty sky, free from dust (of passion) and is essenceless. It is of the essence of existence and (at the same time) of non-existence (41).
>
> It has originated from *prajñā* and *upāya* (united indivisibly). It is the mixture of desire and non-desire. It is the vital air of all living beings. It is the highest letter (*Oṁ*) (42).
>
> It is pervading the whole (universe). It is nothing other than the auspicious Heruka. From it, (all the) existence and non-existence have originated, and (all) other things (have originated) (43)."

These truths obviously claim themselves to be placed higher than the state realized through the Tantric practice of *yoga*. Though they should have been realized through nothing other than the Mahāyānic practice of pilgrimage, still the followers of the *Saṁvara* Tantrism relinquished the practice.

In the *Hevajra-tantra*, the Tantric logic of symbolism was betrayed by the Mahāyānic idea of the truth which is to be realized through difficult deeds. The followers of the *Saṁvarodaya-tantra* in their turn took revenge on the Mahāyānic tendency replacing the practice of pilgrimage to external *pīṭhas* with the yogic practice based on the theory of the internal *pīṭhas*; but, they did it too carelessly and too hastily.

After the theory of internal *pīṭhas* was established, they substituted the yogic practice of making humours circulate within the body for the Mahāyānic practice of doing the pilgrimage along the lengthy path of the three great uncountable aeons, or at least for going on pilgrimage all over the Indian subcontinent, though pilgrimage itself was already a deed symbolizing the former. The pilgrim, who being urged by the fourth consecration of the *Hevajra-tantra* had once started on a pilgrimage, resigned his pilgrimage too easily and returned to the state of a *yogin* sitting without any relation to the outer world. When he resigned pilgrimage, he had not settled the pending question set by the *Hevajra-tantra*. They should not have attempted to solve this question through the Tantric logic; they should not have made the practice of pilgrimage internal. In doing so, however, they crushed the Mahāyānic practice which was needed to realize the truth shown in the fourth consecration.

Here, we find that a new aspect of the 'critical' or precarious character of Tantric Buddhism presents itself in the *Saṁvara* Tantrism. The followers of *Saṁvara* Tantrism were entertaining the Mahāyānic idea of truth, which is to be realized only through the Mahāyānic practice of accumulating merits over the unimaginably long period of the three great uncountable aeons; still they engaged in the Tantric practice which is not valid for realizing the Mahāyānic idea of the truth expressed in such maxims as were quoted above.

The 'crisis' of the *Saṁvara* Tantrism lies in the fact that the Mahāyānic ideal makes the Tantric logic of *yoga* and the Tantric practices based on it only metaphorical or conventional; and the Tantric practice in turn makes the Mahāyānic ideal end only in an empty talk.

The 'crisis' innate within the *Saṁvara* Tantrism should have been condensed to its critical point of explosion and developed thereby a new, revolutionary system of Tantric Buddhism. I have no way to determine whether it occurred at all or how it occurred as my knowledge about Tantrism does not go any further. Therefore, I can only surmize that the general decline of Buddhism at the time indicates that the critical point of explosion was never reached. It would seem that there were no new system developed within the Tantric Buddhism of India which surpassed the Buddhism of *śmaśāna, viz.* the *Hevajra-tantra* and the subsequent *tantras* of the *Saṁvara* literature in their vitality.

Notes

1 Tibetan version: *rNam par snaṅ mdsad chen po mṅon par rdsogs par byaṅ chub pa rnam par sprul ba byin gyis rlob pa śin tu rgyas pa mdo sdeḥi dbaṅ po rgyal po shes bya baḥi chos kyi rnam graṅs. Peking* (*The Tibetan Tripitaka*, edit. by D. T. Suzuki, Tokyo-Kyoto, 1955–1961). No. 126, Vol. 5. Chinese version: 大毘盧遮那成佛神變加持經. *Taisho*, No. 848, Vol. 18.

2 Sanskrit text: *Sarvatathāgatatativasaṁgraha-tantra*. edit, by Kanjin Horiuchi, *Journal of Koyasan University* (*Koyasan-Daigaku-Ronso*, abbrev. *JKU*), Vol. III, 1968, *Mikkyo-Bunka*, No. 90 (1969), No. 91 (1970), *JKU*, Vol. VI, 1971, *Mikkyo-Bunka*, Nos. 97, 98 (1971), *JKU*, Vol. VIII, 1973, *Mikkyo-Bunka*, Nos. 103, 104

(1973) and *Bon-Zō-Kan-Taishō Shoe-Kongōchōgvō-no-Kenkyū*, Koyasan, 1974. Tibetan version: *De bshin gśegs pa thams cad kyi de kho na ñid bsdus pa she bya ba theg pa chen poḥi mdo. Peking*. No. 112, Vol. 4. Chinese version: 佛説一切如來眞實攝大乘現證三昧大敎王經 (30 vols.). *Taisho*. No. 882 (cf. Nos. 865, 866).

3 次明以此一字通攝諸經論等所明理者，且大日經及金剛頂經所明皆不過此菩提爲因大悲爲根方便爲究竟之三句，若攝廣就略攝末歸本，則一切敎義不過此三句，束此三句以爲一吽字，廣而不亂略而不漏此則如來不思議力法然加持之所爲也，雖千經萬論亦不出此三句一字. *Ju-kkan-jā* (『十巻章』). Koyasan University, 1959, p. 70.

4 Sanskrit text: *Guhyasamdja Tantra or Tathāgataguhyaka. GOS* No. LIII. by Benoytosh Bhattacharyya, Barroda, 1931; by S. Bagchi, *Buddhist Sanskrit Texts* No. 9. Darbhanga, 1965; *The Guhyasamāja-tantra: A New Critical Edition*, Yūkei Matsunaga, *JKU* Vol. X. Tibetan version: *De brhin gfegs pn thams cad kyi sku gsuṅ thugs hyi gsaṅ chen gsaṅ ba ḥdus pa shes bya ba brtag paḥi rgyal po chen po. Peking*. No. 81, Vol. 3.

5 Tibetan version: *dPal saṅs rgyas thams cad daṅ mtñam par sbyar ba mkhaḥ ḥgra ma sgyu ma bde baḥi mchog ces bya baḥi rgyud bla ma. Peking*. No. 8, Vol. 1.

6 Horiuchi's text 28, *JKU*, Vol. III, p. 43.

7 Sanskrit text: *The Hevajra Tantra. A Critical Study*. Part II, Sanskrit and Tibetan Texts. By D. L. Snellgrove, Oxford, 1959. Tibetan version: *Kyeḥi rdo rje shes bya ba rgyud hyi rgyal pa, Peking*. No. 10, Vol. 1.

8 For the phenomenon of *sañcāra*, see Shinichi Tsuda, '*Sañcāra*', Transposition of *Yoginis, JIBS*. Vol. XXI, No. 1, 1972, p. 377 f.; S. Tsuda, Lámā *Yoginī* and her Transposition in the *Saṁvara-maṇḍala, JIBS*. Vol. XXIII, No. 2, 1975, p. 992 f.

9 We find an example which looks, at first sight, contradictory to this in the *apabhraṁla* verses of the *Hevajra-tantra* (II. v. 20–23.) providing an evidence for the phenomenon of *sañcāra*, the transposition of *yoginīs*. In these four verses, four *yoginīs, viz*. Pukkasī, Śavarī, Caṇḍāli and Ḍombī, who are located on the outer circle, alternately ask the Lord, who has 'melted' (*drutabhūta*) in the sexual union with his consort Nalrātmyā, to stand up again and practice sexual *yoga* also with them. This is, however, to be taken as an exceptional example reflecting the influence of the original practice of the group of eight *yoginīs*. To this passage, Snellgrove gives following translation:

> (20) "Arise, O Lord, thou whose mind is compassion, and save me, Pukkasī. Embrace me in the union of great bliss, and abandon the condition of voidness."
>
> (20) "Without you I die. Arise, O Hevajra. Leave the condition of voidness, and prosper the doings of Śavarī."
>
> (22) "O Lord of Bliss, who speak your words of power for the benefit of the world, why do you remain in the void? I Candāll entreat you, for without you I cannot consume the four quarters."
>
> (23) "O Wonder-worker, arise, for I know your thought. I, Ḍambī, am weak in mind. Do not interrupt your compassion." Snellgrove, *ibid*. Part I, p. 110 f.

10 Sanskrit text: *The Saṁvarodaya-tantra Selected Chapters*, by Shinichi Tsuda, Tokyo, 1974. For chapter 29, S. Tsuda, "*Tattvanirdela-patala*" of the *Saṁvarodayatantra*: Sanskrit Text and Japanese Translation, *Bukhyo-Gaku*, Vol. 1, 1976. Tibetan version: *dPal bde mchog ḥbyuṅ ba shes bya baḥi rgyud kyi rgyal po chen po. Peking*. No. 20, Vol. 2.

11 ḥdi skad bdag gis thos pa dus gcig na / bcom Idan ḥdas de bshin gśegs pa thams cad byin gyis rlob pa / rdo rje chen po rgya che ha / chos kyi dbyiṅs kyi pho braṅ / rdo rje ḥdsin thams cad ḥdu ba / de bshin gśegs palti mos pas rnam par rol pa / mthaḥ daṅ dbus med clṅ rtse mo mtho ba / rin po cheḥi rgyal pos śin tu legs par brgyan pa ḥbyuṅ baḥi khaṅ bzaṅ chen po rin po cheḥi rgyal poḥi naṅ na // byaṅ chub sems dpaḥi lus

kyi seṅ geḥī khri la bahugs te / ḥdi lta ste / rdo rje ḥdsin nam mkhalt dri ma med pa daṅ / nam mkhaḥ la rnam par ḥgro ba daṅ / nam mkhaḥ ḥbyuṅ ba daṅ / . . . gsaṅ ba paḥi bdag po phyag na rdo rje daṅ / de dag la sogs te / saṅs rgyas kyi shiṅ bcuḥi rdul phra rab kyi rdul sñed kyi rdo rje ḥdsin rnams daṅ thabs geig tu bshugs so // byaṅ chub sems dpaḥ chen pu kun tu bzaṅ po daṅ / byams pa daṅ / ḥjam dpal daṅ / sgrib pa thams cad rnam par sel ba la sogs pa dag gis kyaṅ bskor ciṅ mdun gyis bltas pa la ḥdí lta ste / de bshin gśegs paḥi ñi ma dus gsum las ḥdas par byin gyis brlabs nas / sku daṅ gsuṅ daṅ thugs mñam pa ñid kyi gshi shes bya baḥi chos kyī agoḥi chos ston to // de nas byañ chub sems dpalt kun tu bzaṅ po la sogs pa de dag daṅ / gsaṅ ba paḥi bdag po la sogs pa rdo rje ḥdsin de dag bcom Idan ḥdas rnam par snaṅ mdsad kyi byin gyis brlabs kyis / sku mñam pa fild bkod pa mi zad paḥi mdsod rnam par bsgylṅs pa la shugs so // de bshin du sguṅ daṅ thugs mñam pa ñid bkod pa mi rad paḥi mdsod rnam par bsgyiṅs pa la shugs te / ḥon kyaṅ bcom Idan ḥdas rnam par snaṅ mdsad kyi sku ḥam gsuṅ ṅam thugs la ni ḥjug pa ḥam ldog pa mi dmigs so // thams cad du yaṅ bcom ldan ḥdas rnam par snaṅ mdsad kyi skuḥi phrin las thams cad daṅ / gsuṅ gi phrin las thams cad daṅ / thugs kyi phrin las thams cad sems can gyi khams thams cad la kun tu gsaṅ sṅags kyi tshul gyi tshig ḥdi dag gis chos ston par mthoṅ ba ni ḥdi lta ste / sems can las kyi tshe rnam par bskyed pa rnams sems daṅ po bskyed pa nas bzuṅ ste / sa bcu paḥi bar la gnas pa ḥdi ñid la yoṅs su rdsogs par bya ba daṅ / tas kyi tshe bkag pa rnams kyaṅ srid paḥi myu gu mṅon par ḥgrub par bya baḥi phyir rdo rje ḥdsin paḥi lus daṅ ḥdra ba daṅ / byaṅ chub sems dpaḥ kun tu braṅ po daṅ / phyag na pad maḥi lus ḥdra ba phyogs bcu na gsaṅ sṅags kyl tshul gyī tshig rnam par dag paḥi tshig dag gis chos ston pa dag kyaṅ mthoṅ ṅo // *Peking*. Vol. 5, 240–3~5.1.

12 ji ltar de bshin gśegs pa dgra bcom pa yaṅ dag par rdsogs paḥi saṅs rgyas rnams kyis thams cad mkhyen paḥi ye śes brāes nas / thams cad mkhyen paḥi ye śes de sems can rnams la rnam par phye ste / *Peking*. Vol. 5, 240–5–5.

13 gshan yaṅ byaṅ chub sems dpaḥ gsaṅ sṅaga kyi sgo nas byaṅ chub sems dpaḥi spyad pa spyod pa / bskal pa bye ba khrig brgya stoṅ dpag tu med pa bsags pa mams la śes rab daṅ thabs dpag tu med pas yoṅs su bzuṅ ba / . . . śin tu ṅo bo ñid med paḥi sems skye ste / gsaṅ ba paḥi bdag po / ḥdi ni byaṅ chub kyi sems daṅ po shes rgyal ba rnams kyis gsuṅs so // *Peking*. Vol. 5, 243–2–3~7.

14 . . . bcom Idan ḥdas ḥdl lta ste dper bgyi na / chuḥl khams ni sems can thams cad kyi lus sim par bgyid pa lags so // de bshin du thams cad mkhyen paḥi ye śes kyaṅ tha daṅ bcas paḥi ḥjig sten rab tu sim par bgyid pa lags na / bcom Idan ḥdas / ye śes ḥdiḥi rgyu ni gaṅ lags / rtsa ba ni gaṅ lags / mthar thug pa ni gaṅ lags / *Peking*. Vol. 5, 241–1–5~6.

15 This passage is quoted in Kamalaśila's *Bhāvanākrama: Vairocandbhisaṃbodhau cohtam / tad etat sarvajñajñdnaṃ karuṇāmūlaṃ bodhicittahetukam upāyaparyavasd-nam iti*. G. Tucci, *Minor Buddhist Texts* Part II, p. 196.

16 lag na rdo rje / legs so legs so // lag na rdo rje / gaṅ khyod ṅa la don ḥdi ḥdri ba ni yaṅ legs so // deḥl phyir ñon la legs par rab tu yid la zuṅ śig daṅ / ṅas khyod la bśad do // rgyu ni byaṅ chub kyi sems so / rtsa ba ni sñiṅ rje chen paḥo / mthar thug pa ni thabs to // gsaṅ ba paḥl bdag po / de la byaṅ chub gaṅ she ne / raṅ gi sems yaṅ dag pa ji lta ba bshin yoṅs su śes pa ste / de yaṅ bla na med pa yaṅ dag par rdsogs paḥi byaṅ chush bo // *Peking*. Vol. 5, 241~1–7~2.1.

17 bcom ldan ḥdas thams cad mkhyen pa ñid ni gaṅ nas yous su btsal bar bgyi // gaṅ gis ni hyaṅ chub mṅon par rdsogs par ḥtshaṅ rgya bar bgyi // *Peking*. Vol. 5, 241–2–3~1.

18 byaṅ chub daṅ thams cad mkhyen pa ñid ni raṅ gi sems las yoṅs su btsal bar byaḥo // de ciḥi phyir she na / sems de ni raṅ bshin gyis yoṅs su dag pa yin te / *Peking*. Vol. 5, 241–2–4~5.

19 *bodhicitta* is a word of double meaning. The commentator Buddhaguhya rightly says in his *Longer Commentary: "bodhicitta* is of two kinds: one is the brave mind

seeking after enlightenment, the other, the mind of the nature of enlightenment." *de la byaṅ chub kyi sems la yaṅ rnam pa gñis te byaṅ chub hyi phyir sems dpaḥ daṅ / byaṅ chub kyi raṅ bshin gyi sems so // Peking*. Vol. 77, 236–4–3~4 (Revised) and 116–4–5 (Unrevised Longer Commentary). *Bodhicitta* shown in the axiom '*prajñā* plus *upāya* is *bodhicitta*' (see p. 21) corresponds with what Buddhagubya says "the mind of the nature of enlightenment".

20 *The Shorter Commentary: rNam par maṅ mdsad mṅon par rdsogs par byaṅ chub paḥi rgyud kyi bsdus don. Peking*. No. 3486, Vol. 77. *The Unrevised Longer Commentary: rNam par snaṅ mdsad mṅon par rdsogs par byaṅ chub pa rnam par sprul pa byin gyis rlob paḥi rgyud chen poḥi blad pa. Peking*. No. 3487, Vol. 77. The *Revised Longer Commentary: rNam par snaṅ mdsad mṅon par rdsogs par byaṅ chub pa rnam par sprul pa byin gyis rlob paḥi rgyud chen poḥi ḥgrel pa. Peking*. No. 3490, Vol. 77.

21 bcom ldan *ḥdas* ji ltar byaṅ chub tu sems bskyed pa shes bgyi ba lags / byaṅ chub ḥbyuṅ baḥl sems skyes paḥi // mtshan ñid jf ltar ḥtshal bar bgyi // sems mkhyen pa ni rnams kyi mchog // dpaḥ chen ye śes las byuṅ ba // ci sñed cig las ḥdas nas ni // skye bar ḥgyur ha bstan du gsol // mgon po sems kyi mtshan ñid daṅ // dus kyaṅ rgya cher bśad du gsol // de dag bsod nams ci ḥdra daṅ // spyod pa ci ḥdrar ḥgyur ba daṅ // sems la sems kyi khyad par yaṅ // thub pa chen pos bstan du gsol // *Peking*. Vol. 5, 241–4–5~8.

22 de skad gsol nas de yi tshe // bcom ldan rnam par snaṅ chen gyis // phyag na rdo rje cher ḥbyṅ la // legs so bu shes ḥdi skād gsuṅs // theg pa chen poḥi go ḥphaṅ mchog // sems kyi rgyud kyi mtshan ñid ni // rdsongs saṅs rgyas kyi gsaṅ baḥi mchog // rtog ge kun gyis mi śes pa // thams cad khyod la bśad par bya // yid geig bsdus la mñan par gyis // *Peking*. Vol. 5, 241–4–8~5–1.

23 *Peking*. vol. 5, 242–2.6. Chinese version: 惟願世尊説彼心. *Taisho*. Vol. 18, p. 2, c. 1. 5.

24 *Peking*. Vol. 77, 121–2.6.

25 gsaṅ ba paḥi bdag po / sems kyi khyad par gyi mtshan ñid ñon cig / gsaṅ ba paḥi bdag po / de la sems ḥdi ni ḥdod chags kyi sems daṅ / ḥdod chags daṅ bral baḥi sams daṅ / she sdaṅ gi sems daṅ / byaṁs paḥl sems daṅ / gti mug gi sems daṅ / . . . . . . de la ḥdod chags kyi sems gaṅ she na chags pa can chos kun tu sten paḥo // ḥdod chags daṅ bral baḥi sems gaṅ she na / ḥdod chags daṅ bral ba chos kun tu sten paḥo // she sdaṅ gi sems gaṅ she na / sdaṅ bas chos kun tu sten paḥo // byams paḥi sems gaṅ she na / byams pa daṅ ldan pas chos kun in sten paḥo // gti mug gi sems gaṅ she na / gaṅ mi dpyod par chos sten paḥo // . . . gsaṅ ba paḥi hdag po / de ltar na gcig gñis gsum bshi lṅa gāts su bsgyur ba byas pas / ḥjig rten paḥi sems brgya drug cu bskal pa gsum gyis ḥdas nas / ḥjig rten las ḥdas paḥi sems skye ste / ḥdi lta ste / ḥdi ni phuṅ po tsam ñid de // bdag ni nam yaṅ yod ma yin // dhaṅ poḥi groṅ khyer khams rnams kyis // ḥjig rten don med rnam par ñams // . . . . . . *Peking*. Vol. 5, 242–2–7~243–1–3.

26 *Peking*. Vol. 77, 121–4–2~6; 241–3–3~7.

27 大毘盧遮那成佛經疏. *Taisho*. No. 1796, Vol. 59.

28 *Taisho*. Vol. 18, p. 3, a, 1.28 f.

29 *Taisho*. Vol. 39, p. 600, c, 1. 19 f.

30 *Taisho*. Vol. 39, p. 600, c, 1.4 f.

31 *Peking*. Vol. 77, 121–1–1; 239–5–2.

32 住心雖無量· 且擧十綱攝之衆毛. *Taisho*. No. 2425, Vol. 77, p. 303, c, 1. 27 f.

33 gsaṅ ba paḥi bdag po ḥdi ni byaṅ chub sems dpaḥi byaṅ chub kyi sems rnam par dag paḥi sgo shes bya ba / chos snaṅ baḥi sgo chos snaṅ baḥi tshul daṅ po ste / gaṅ la gnas na bya chub sems dpaḥ rnams tshegs chuṅ ṅus sgrib pa thams cad spoṅ baḥi ùṅ ṅe ḥdsin thob ciṅ / de thob pas byaṅ chub sems dpaḥ rnams saṅs rgyas thams cad daṅ lhan cig ḥgrogs pa ḥthab par ḥgyur / mṅon par śes pa iṅa dag kyaṅ ḥthob par ḥgyur / skad daṅ sgra daṅ dbyaṅs mthaḥ yas paḥi gzuṅs kyaṅ ḥthob par ḥgyur / sems can gyi

bsam pa rjes su śes pa daṅ / de bshin gśegs pa thams cad kyis byin gyis brlabs śiṅ ḥkhor ba na yoṅs su mi ñams paḥi chos can du ḥgyur / sems can gyi don bya ba dag la yoṅs su mi skyo bar ḥgyur / ḥdus ma byas kyi tshui khrims la rab tu gnas pa daṅ / log par lta ba rnam par spaṅs pa daṅ / yaṅ dag par lta ba rtogs par khoṅ du chud par ḥgyur ba yin no // gsaṅ ba paḥi bdag po / gshan yaṅ agrib pa thams cad spoṅ baḥi tiṅ ṅe ḥdsin ḥdi la gnas paḥi byaṅ chub sems dpaḥ ni / mos paḥi stobs bskyed pas / tshegs chuṅ ṅus saṅs rgyas kyi chos thams cad yoṅs su rdsogs par byed de / gsaṅ ba paḥi bdag po / mdor na rigs kyi bu ḥam rigs kyi bu mo de ni yon tan dpag tu med pa daṅ ldan par ḥgyur ro // *Peking*. Vol. 5, 241–3.8~4.5.

34 Sanskrit text edit. by K. Horiuchi, 1~17.
35 Horiuchi's text, 18.
36 Horiuchi, *ibid.* 19.
37 Horiuchi, *ibid.* 20~21.
38 Horiuchi, *ibid.* 20~29.
39 Horiuchi, *ibid.* 210~213.
40 D. L. Snellgrove, *The Hevajra Tantra A Critical Study*. Part II, p. 16.
41 Snellgrove, *ibid.* Part II, p. 61.
42 MS belonging to the University of Tokyo, No. 511 (dated 1595 A.D.) *vajraṁ ḍombi bhavet mudrā padmaṁ iti tathaiva ca / katma rajaki sadākhydtā brahmaṇí ca tathāgatī* / (11b. 2~3)

MS belonging to the University of Tokyo, No. 509 (dated 1830 A.D.) *vajrath ḍāmbī bhavyan mudrā padma nartī tathaiva ca / karmma rajakī saddkhyāiā bràhmanī ca tathāgatī* // (8a. 1~2)

MS belonging to the University of Tokyo, No. 512 (dated 1844 A.D.) *vajraṁ ḍombi bhaven mudrā padman nartī tathaiva ca / karma rajaki sadākhyātā brāhmaṇī ca tathāgati* / (9b. 6~10a. 1)

MS belonging to the University of Tokyo, No.510 (not dated) *vajraṁ ḍombī bhaven mudrd padmaṁ nattī tathaiva ca / karmma raṁjakī (?) samākhyātā brdhmaṇí ca tathàgata* // (7b. 5~6)

MS belonging to the University of Kyoto, No.2252787 (dated 1911 A.D.) *vajra ḍombi bhaven mudrā padma nartti tathaiva ca // karma rajakī samdkhyātā brāhmaṇī ca tathāgati* // (8a. 8~8b. 1)

43 In the *Hevajra-tantra*, the *maṇḍala* is described in conformity to the *Tattvasaṁgraha-tantra. yathā Tattvasaṁgrahe maṇḍalavidhis tathā kartavyaṃ* // "The *maṇḍala*-ritual should be performed as it is given in the *Tattvasaṃgraha*." HV. II. v. 57. Snellgrave, *ibid.* Part II, p. 84, Part I, p. 113.
44 For this idea of the structure of the human body, see S. Tsuda, 「四輪三脉の身體観」, 『中村元博士還暦記念論集インド思想と佛教』, Tokyo, 1974, p. 293 f.
45 For the Sanskrit text of the chapter of consecration of the *Saṁpuṭodbhava-tantra*, see S. Tsuda, The Rite of Consecration in the *Saṁpuṭodbhava-tantra, Studies in Buddhist Thought. Dedicated to Professor Jio Ohuda in Commemoration of his Seventy-seventh Birthday*, Kyoto, 1976, p. 1151 f.
46 *The Collected Works of Bu ston*, edit. by Lokesh Chandra, Ja, 595–5–6.
47 Snellgrove, *ibid.* Part II, 100, Part I, p. 119.
48 cf. Snellgrove, *ibid.* Part II, p. 21~24.
49 S. Tsuda. *The Saṁvarodaya-tantra Selected Chapters*, p. 104 f.
50 Tsuda, *ibid.* p. 271 f. For the *pīṭha* theory of the *Saṁvarodaya-tantra*, see S. Tsuda. Theory of *Pīṭha* in the *Saṁvara* Literature (1), *Butan Gukuho*, No. 16, 1971.
51 S. Tsuda, *The Saṁvarodaya-tantra Selected Chapters*, p. 93 f.
52 Tsuda, *ibid.* p. 260 f.
53 For the pīṭha theory of the *Saṁpuṭodbhava-tantra*, see S. Tsuda, Theory of *Piṭha* in the *Saṁvara* Literature (II), *Buzan Gakuho*, No. 17–18, 1973.

54 For the Sanskrit text of the *Vajraḍāha-tantra*, see S. Tsuda, Theory of *Pīṭha* in the *Samvara* Literature, Buzan Gakuho, No. 17.18.
55 For this passage, see S. Tsuda, "*Tattvanirdeśa-paṭala*" of the *Saṁvarodaya-tantra*: Sanskrit Text and Japanese Translation, Bukkyo-Gaku, Vol. 1, 1976.
56 For this passage, see S. Tsuda, The Rite of Consecration in the *Saṁpuṭodbhava-tantra*, *Studies in Buddhist Thought* abovementioned (Note 45).